Fraterna Correptio.

OR, THE

SAINTS ZEALE AGAINST SINFUL ALTARS:

Delivered in a

SERMON

Preached on a day of Humiliation for the *Errors, Heresies, & Schisms* of our times and Nations.

By Z. C. Minister of the Word.

Utinam talis zelus in nobis esset, & quidem non unum Altare erectum videmus, sed innumera. *Ferus* in declam. in *Iosh.* 22.

Because Ephraim hath made many Altars to sin, Altars shall be unto him to sin. Hosea 8. 11.

And they arose and took away the Altars that were in Ierusalem. 2 Chron. 30. 14.

We have an Altar, whereof they have no right to eate, who serve the Tabernacle, Heb. 13. 10.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THE
RIGHT WORSHIPFUL,
Mr. *Daniel Andrewes*,
Esquire:
ALDERMAN
of the Honourable City of
LONDON.

Right Worshipful,

DEdications of Books being a custome no lesse commendable then common, did engage my prefixing of your worthy name to this small Treatile, and simple (I dare not so call it, for the matter declared in it, but the management of it by the Author) Sermon: preached (in obedience to the commands of Church-Officers) some moneths since, and now

published to the provoking of more general zeale against sinful Altars then our times afford. Worthy Sir, the aimes propounded to my self in this present Dedication, are such as are common to all Dedications: First, to expresse my thankful acceptance and acknowledgement of your undeserved respect to me, a meere stranger in your frequent attendance on my Ministery; and fervent expostulations with some in my behalf, in matters wherein I have been concerned, and many other wayes expressed. Secondly, and chiefly to excite your zeal for, and engage your attendance on Gods one only Altar distinct from, nay, in opposition to all false Altars of human erection. Sir, I do not in the least tax you of lukewarmnesse, or suspect your recession from Gods Altar: no, my self, and many others that minister to the Lord, having observed your constant attendance on the *Ordinances* of the Gospel, your countenance to the Ministers of the Gospel, your complaints against the *Errors*, *Heresies*, and *Schismes* of the times, with your careful turning away from such as innovate new and false principles, and practices of Divine worship, must needs bear witnesse that you are very fit to be

one of the ten Princes of our English *Israel*, to be delegated to expostulate with separate brethren concerning their seeming (at least) building of an Altar against the Altar of the Lord. Sir, though I speak this without flattery, yet I cannot but observe you obnoxious unto danger, and a fit object of the Apostles Caution, *Let him that thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall*: and that not only as you are a man subject to infirmity, as are your brethren: but also as you are eminent by your place, a Ruler in our *Israel*, capable of being more serviceable to God whilest you stand, and to Satan if you fall. We see *Corahs* rebellion and formall Altar-building-sin drew in *two hundred and fifty Rulers famous in the Congregation, and men of renowne*. Satan well knowes he is a meane man that drawes not after him some Clients: and that the multitude (like Bees) follow their master. Hence his policie is to make the Leaders of the people, leaders of them into sin. May I therefore be bold to commend to your reading this small Treatise, as an antidote to temptation, and guard against all the assaults of Satan, by which he may labour to batter

1 Cor. 10. 12.

250.

5

in pieces your preſent zeale to the Lords Altar. And now, Sir, I cannot paſſe over the third common aime of Dedications, wherein you may be ſerviceable to the Author; nay, to God and the ſoules of men: that is, that your eminent Name
3 may commend this poore Sermon to publick acceptance, and your report of the words of the Lord therein ſpoke, may provoke a deſire in others the Rulers of this ſinful Citie to read and hear it: Sir, it is worth obſervation that *Baruchs* roll written againſt Altar-building *Jeruſalem*, from the mouth of the Prophet *Jeremiah*; by the favour of *Michaiah the ſon of Gemariah the ſon of Shaphan*, obtained an audience from all the Princes; nay, an acceſſe into the preſence of the King of *Iſrael*. If in this reſpect this ſmall Tract may become a *Baruchs* roll; *It may be they will preſent their ſupplications before the Lord, and returne every one from his evil way: for great is the anger and the furie that the Lord hath pronounced againſt this people.* Sir, I will no longer trouble you, but leave it under the ſhadow of your Worſhips favour, not doubting your readineſſe to cover the infirmities of

Jer. 36. 13, 14, 15, 16.
5

it,

it, and its Author with your scarlet robe; and beg of God that it may be useful to your counsel and comfort in constant attendance on, and contentions for Gods one only Altar. This, Sir, shall be the daily prayer of him who is,

SIR,

Yours to serve you

in all Gospel-Altar-

ministrations;

Z. C.

TO THE

Reader.

Courteous Reader,

THou hast here a Sermon some moneths since preached at the command of some in authority in the Church, on a day of Humiliation for the spreading Errors, Heresies and Scismes of our place and times. It was then by some sincere worshippers at Gods Altar, desired to be made more publike; but was by the Author denied, and adjudged to remaine in silence; yet revived importunity hath reversed that sentence, and presented it to thy view and censure; if thou hast, as doth become the sons of Zion beene observant of what hath past in our English Israel, thou canst not but have seene Church against Church,

Church, Miniſtery againſt Miniſtery, Baptiſme againſt Baptiſme, Faſt againſt Faſt, and Thankſgiving againſt Thankſgiving; ſome worſhipping God one way, others in a way direct contrary. Certaine it is, both cannot be the way of the Lord, one muſt be humane invention, will-worſhip, an Altar againſt Gods Altar, and ſo the object of zealous reſiſtance; receive then this ſmall Tract, as that which may by the grace of God be in ſome meaſure uſefull to diſcover the ſinfull Altar, and direct thy duty towards it.

Two things I deſire to premiſe to thee at the entrit of the work: The firſt is an anſwer to an objection, of which in the preaching of the Sermon I had not time to take notice; neither have ſince, as I might have done, inſerted it; but think convenient to note to thee in this place. It is this:

If God will be worſhipped at one only Altar, how came it to paſſe that the Patriarchs and holy men of God did worſhip at various and diſtinct Altars?

To this I anſwer.

Firſt, theſe various and diſtinct Altars were uſed before God had pitched his Tabernacle and the viſible Arke of his preſence,

presence, and fixed his Name and people in a setled station: such were the Altars of Abraham and the Patriarchs in their pilgrimage and travels: but when God had setled Israel, we read not of any ordinarily built or used. Hence when David was banished from Jerusalem, we read of his panting thirstie desire of returne for the Sanctuary sake, but not of his rearing any Altar elsewhere. It was his sad affliction to want worship at Gods Altar; it would have beene his sinne to set up an Altar in a strange place.

Secondly, The Altars that at any time were erected, were able to plead extraordinary and immediate command from God on extraordinary and emergent occasions: of this nature was Abrahams Altar in monte Moriah, and Gideons Altar called Jehovah Shalom, Judges 6.24. and Davids Altar in the threshing-floore of Araunah the Jebusite, 2 Sam. 24. 25. Extraordinary precepts cannot be ordinary proofs.

Thirdly, These were temporarie and transient, passed away as soone as they had served the special occasion for which they were erected; so that God had but one permanent abiding Altar at which he was constantly worshipped. Lastly,

Lastly, Though these Altars were various and distinct in matter, yet they were one for object and forme of Divine service; and if God dispence with the matter by an immediate command, it will be no warrant ordinarily to set up different matter of divine worship.

The second thing I would premise, is, by way of admonition, when thou resistest sinful Altars, keepe ranke and order: step not out of thy place and calling: Invade not the Ministers (whose,) with authority to reprove, and excommunicate: nor yet the Magistrates Throne, to draw the sword of vengeance, and drive a present precipitate warre against brethren. In thy place observe the sin, mourne under it, admonish brethren of it, wait with patience and in peace to see what the Princes and Priests of Israel *will do against it: It is true in the text under consideration, all* Israel *were up in armes with sword in hand, and purpose in heart to resist the sinne; but observe* Joshuah *and* Phinehas, *the Princes and Priests of the Lord summon to it, and lead them in it: Israel might never stirre to warre till summoned by the sounding alarms of the silver*

Numb 10.

ſilver trumpets: they roſe not to warre againſt the Altars of Baal, when Solomon was addicted to a ſinful Toleration. If God give Magiſtrates up to a ſinful indulgence of falſe Altars, it is thy duty to ſit in peace, and by ſecret mournings to reſiſt the ſinne; thy irregular inſurrection will be the ſinne of thy ſoul, and ſhame of thy profeſſion. Courteous Reader, let me therefore charge thee to performe the practices of piety with a ſpirit of peace, and to keep thy owne compaſſe in expreſſion of thy zeale to Gods Altar. I will hold thee no longer, but to let thee know, that if any ſhall charge this Sermon with violence and bitterneſſe, it is nothing but what is expected; and therefore was endeavoured to be declined as farre as was conſiſtent with Miniſterial plainneſſe and zeale; and the charge being groundleſſe, will not be regarded by the Author, who hath taken it up for a lamentation, that our dayes denominate zeale violence, and lukewarmneſſe moderation, contending for connivence at, and indulgence of poſitive ſinne, and endeavouring to extend Toleration of all religions ſo farre, that Schiſmes, Errors, and

and Hereſies may not only be exempted from the Magiſtrates ſword and Churches Cenſures, but even Miniſterial reproof and private Chriſtians complaint. So commending thee to the conſideration of thy duty hereby declared; and both it and thee to the grace of a jealous God; I ſubſcribe my ſelf

Thine to ſerve thee

at Gods ſincere

and ſingle Altar,

Z. C.

Errata.

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TO

Fraterna Correptio,
OR,
SAINTS ZEALE
Againſt Sinful
Altars.

Josh. 22. the latter end of the 19. verſe.

Rebel not againſt the Lord, and rebel not againſt us, to build an Altar beſides the Altar of the Lord.

Sincerity in the Lords Worſhip being alwayes ſuſpicious of mixture, corruption or apoſtaſie, doth inſtigate and bring forth a zealous reſiſtance of every thing that beares

but the shew of innovation: This we may finde very fully manifested by the ten tribes of *Israel*, that had passed over *Jordan*, and possessed the promised land on that side: if we observe their zealous carriage (grounded but on a supposition and suspecting jealousie) towards their brethren of the two tribes that did abide on the other side of *Jordan*, which in this Chapter is at large declared.

The Chapter is, as the Book, Historical; and containes in it these two parts.

First, *it Joshuah's religious dismission of* Reuben, Gad, *and the half tribe of* Manasseh, *to their allotted portion of the promised land*: wherein after the commendation of their past obedience, ready attendance on their brethren, he sends them away with a solemn charge, to continue their obedience to Gods Commandments, and their constant adherence to him, with all their heart and soule, unto the 9. verse.

The second part declares the Consequents of their return, and they are two as the most considerable.

Conseq. 1. First, *the work begun by them* in their return to their possession: and that is the

the building of a great Altar, like unto the Altar of God. A thing that might well provoke jealouſie, *v.* 9, 10.

Secondly, *the wiſe carriage of their brethren towards them, and theirs towards their brethren*, on the jealous apprehenſions of the work begun by them; and this is to the end of the chapter. And in their mutual carriage we may obſerve theſe things. *Conſeq.* 2.

1. The nine tribes and halfe *obſerve it, they heard it, and heed it*, *v.* 11.

2. *Prepare a power, and purpoſe a poſitive reſiſtance of it*, if found to be as they ſuſpected, *v.* 12.

3. *Preſently diſpatch Phinehas with ten Princes to demand an account of their work*, and weighty reaſons that might induce to it: as alſo to caution and counſel their deſiſtance and ceſſation, *v.* 13, 14. who coming to them diſcharge their duties, and execute their commiſſion theſe wayes.

Firſt, by repreſenting to them the apprehenſions of their brethren, concerning their Altar-building, *v.* 16.

Secondly, by rendring the ſin vilein their ſight, if they had intended it as was feard: by aggravating the ſame by the ſin of

Achan and *Baal-Peor*, for which sins the wounds received were yet green, *v.* 17, 18, and 20.

Thirdly, requiring by their authority a cessation from so sinful a work: and propounding an expedient to the conceived cause, *v.* 19.

4. *A pathetical, religious and brotherly answer of the two tribes and the halfe*, unto the message received from their brethren, wherein they (*though building an Altar*) yet do not stubbornly deny to give their brethren an account of their proceedings therein: but do

First, by a solemn appeal to God, *protest that it was not, as was suspected* by their brethren, to separate from them, or set up a place for the Lords worship not by him commanded, or to commit idolatry.

Secondly, they publish *the very grounds and reasons inducing, and end whereunto they built their Altar, after the fashion of the Altar of God*; (viz.) that it might be a monument of their obedience, and relation to the Lord, as also an engagement to posterity to worship the same God, at his own appointed place: shut out

out the feared differences that might grow by the distance of their possession; from *v.* 21. *ad* 30.

5*ly*. *The pleasant departure* of the messengers, satisfied in the answer received, and cheared by this evidence of Gods presence and mercy, *v.* 30, 31, 32.

6*ly*. *The peoples denomination* of their finished Altar, according to their declared end of its erection, *v.* 33, 34.

The chapter thus opened, you may see the words of the text to fall under the ten tribes apprehension of the work of the two tribes, and message delivered by *Phinehas*, and the ten Princes, and they are an authoritative *dehortation*, wherein we may observe these two parts.

1. *The suspected sin dehorted from*: to build an Altar besides the Altar of the Lord.

2. *The serious reasons exhibited to enforce it*, which are two, setting out the nature of the sin as it is a rebellion

against { God: / Us, his People.

If time would admit, and it were now convenient, I might from the distributed parts of the chapter infer many useful Conclusions and necessary Doctrines, but that I decline as a work more proper to the exposition of the whole chapter, then indeed to any one thing chosen to be spoken to in it. I might also if I delighted in the mincing of the words into many parts, observe many particulars, as

1. The dehorters, *the ten tribes by their Priest and Princes.*

2. The dehorted, *the two tribes and half.*

3. The matter from which they are dehorted, from *building an Altar besides the Altar of God.*

4. The manner of the dehortation, with the reasons enforcing it.

From these several parts I might infer so many several Conclusions, and speak to them particularly: but my designe and desire is, to lay before you *the sinfulness of the sin of Altar-building*, suspected by the ten tribes to be in act in the two tribes; and therefore I shall desire you to look on the words, as an abstract of the whole carriage of the ten tribes towards the

the two tribes on a conceived guilt: or *a compendious manifestation of their sincerity to, and zeal for the true worship of God, against the supposed defection of their brethren.*

As for the explication of the words, there is in them little or no difficulty: as for what might be said to shew this sin to be a rebellion against God, and against his people, I shall (God willing) speak to it in the doctrinal prosecution of the truth to be inferred: only I shall desire you to take notice, that from this history, is by the general judgement of Expositors inferred, *the Magistrates power in punishing hereticks and apostates, and duty to preserve uniformity of divine worship*: nay, hereby is justified the making war against such as make defection from the Altar of God; *Piscator* saith, *It was Piety in the ten tribes, that they resolve to make War with the two tribes for their defection from the true God. The Assembly of Divines* say, *Such was their zeal, that they had rather hazard their lives, then suffer Gods true Religion to be corrupted*: for God had ordained there should be but one place for publick worship and service, and but one

Annot.

Altar. The *Geneva* and *Dutch Annotations* approve the war. Not to note any thing out of Popish Writers, as *Vatablus*, *Cajetan*, *Cornelius a Lapide*, *Masius* and others, who generally justifie the war, and with *Fernus* say, *They sent messengers to try the crime, and bring to repentance, and were ready if the two tribes obeyed not, armis discernere, to decide the matter by warre*; and this is necessary for you to take notice of, that God had ordained a station for his worship, as well as for his people, and determined one special *Altar* to be erected, to which he bound his people to bring all their offerings, and by a positive Law prohibited the erection of any other *Altar*, (as in *Deut.* 12. is to be seen at large) then that which was built by *Moses* before the Tabernacle, and afterwards by *Solomon* in the Temple, which, as *Piscator* observeth, laid a necessity on the ten tribes to make war with the two tribes, by reason of which they did not consult whether they should do it or no, but the manner how to manage it: so that the standing Ordinance of God, for adherencie to one only *Altar* (as the* signe of one only Mediatour, and the bond of unity

* Voluit Deus unicum tantùm esse altare in suo populo: ut esset typus unici Mediatoris Christi, tum ut esset nervus unitatis in Religione. *Par. in loc.*

thicy in Religion) was by the ten tribes contended for, when they conceived their brethrens erection of another *Altar*, in a place distinct from that prescribed by the Lord, to be the violation thereof; and this occasioned the dehortation in the text, *Rebell not against the Lord, nor rebel against us by building you an Altar besides the Altar of the Lord.* So that from the words thus generally considered and briefly opened, I shall commend to your Christian and serious consideration, this general Observation or Point of Doctrine.

Doct. *Erection of Altars besides the Altars of God, is a sin to be seasonably seen unto by the sincere Worshippers of God.*

The zealous discharge of this duty by *Hezekiah* and *Josiah*, in the demolishing of *Altars*, besides the *Altar* of God, and reducing the people to the unity of worship, is in sacred Records specially mentioned as the lustre of their religious reforming times: whilest the neglect thereof is singled out and set up as the black butt of blemish to religious *Asa*, *Amaziah*, *Azariah* and *Jotham*, sincere Worshippers of God.

2 Kings 18. 4. 23. 12.

1 Kings 15. 14.

2 Kings 14. 4. 15. 4, 35.

But for the more full prosecution of this

this truth I shall propound this method, to speak to you by way of Illustration, Confirmation and Application.

First, by way of Illustration; and shall endeavour to open to you two things.

First, how Altars may be said to be built, besides the Altars of God, and that even in Gospel-dayes.

Secondly, how and wherein sincere Worshippers of God are to act and approve their duty in seeing to this sin of Altar-building.

First, *then to speak to the first of these*, (viz.) *how Altars may be built, even under the Gospel, besides the Altars of God*; I shall desire you to consider the terme; *Altar* is in Scripture-phrase, properly or improperly and figuratively significant.

1. *In a proper sense*, it signifies *organum divini cultûs præcipuum*, the chief instrument of the divine worship, ordained to be built before the Tabernacle, or in the Temple, on the which the Priests were to wait, that they might offer the sacrifices the people were bound to present in that very place; of which we reade in *Deut.* 12. where God commands

mands an *Altar* to be built, and the people to worship him there: even an instrument of his worship; and thus it is generally read in the Old Testament, for that *very instrument of Gods worship*: in this sense the Heathens generally use the word and thing, and the Papists contend for the same thing, by imposing on us the proper and restrict sense of the word: perswading and practising the building of *Altars*, distinct places of divine worship for the Sacrament of the Lords Supper to be offered on, whence they call that Ordinance, *the sacrifice of the Altar*. What man of but mean capacity and knowledge in the Scriptures, observing the Lord Jesus the Antitype of both *Sacrifice* and *Altar*, sees not their assertion as well as argument to be Jewish? (but I intending an illustration, not confutation: This having been by many of the Learned confuted,) shall not stand upon, or spend time to do it: only I desire you to note, that in this proper sense God under the Gospel, requiring no sacrifices, requireth no *Altar* of stone, or brick, or the like matter to be built unto him, but a sincere and spiritual apprehension and adherence to Christ

Heb. 13. 10.

Habemus Altare, videlicet Christum & sacrosanctum ipsius sacrificium. *Hun. in loc.*

Inepti sunt qui hinc altaria lapidea vel lignea in Templis Christianorum requirunt. *Par. in Heb.*

Christ, as our real and *proper Altar*, as wel as sacrifice, to which every believing soul is *privilegio*, not *officio*, a spiritual Priest to offer prayer, praises, &c. unto God, 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. So that to build material *Altars* of wood, stone and the like, must needs be a sin to be seen unto, and withstood, as opposite to Christ our one only Altar unto God; and that to contend for Altars in this sense, is so farre from my intent, that I with *Pareus* declare them *fooliſh and simple that so do.*

2. *In an improper and figurative sense*, the word is more strictly and allegorically used by the Fathers, as *Augustine*, *Optatus* and others, when they do by this word denominate the Table, Instrument, or seat on which the bread and the wine at the Lords Supper was placed *the Altar*, and so did vulgarly call that Ordinance *the Sacrament of the Altar*: the which terme of theirs the Papists taking advantage or occasion by, labour to justifie their Altars, & impose it on us on

Eece qualem Ecclesiæ sententiam audire meretur qui ad convivium nuptiale, id est, ad Altare Domini aut ebrioſus, aut adulter, &c. præsumit accedere. Qui agnoscens reatum sumum ipse se ab Altari Eccl. siæ subtraxerit: ab æterno illo & cœlesti convivio excommunicari penitus non timebit. *Aug. in Christi n.* De signis ejusdem fractit. *Aug. ad Bon. ep.* 50.

paine

paine of heresie to be received, much advancing the Fathers above the Scriptures authority, the which their persons and judgements were subject to, and whosoever observes the expressions of the Fathers, doth clearly see the opposition of *Altar* in the Temple to our *Altar* in Heaven, the denomination of it the *wedding Supper*, and in expresse termes sometimes *the Table*, and *the Lords Supper*, cannot but confesse that they did allegorically use the terme Altar: and in their complaints of the furious carriage of the *Donatists* and *Arrians*, cry out of their breaking down of the boards of the *Altar*, and many times expressely of *the tables*, and burning the *wooden board*, &c. for many of them at last, seeing the corruption which began to grow by the use of the word Altar, where the thing was denied did more warily and improperly use τραπέζαν a table, for the place of the elements: so that in this sense we do not take the word Altar in the Doctrine: for though the Sacraments be parts of the divine

Act Altare visibile quod in Ecclesia ponitur multi sceterati accedere possunt ad illud cœleste quo præcursor pro nobis introivit Iesus nullus eorum accedere possunt. *Aug. de necessitate pœnitentiæ. Hom.* 1. Subscellia thronum mensam ligneam Tabulis Ecclesiæ & cætera quæ poterant foràs elata comburerunt. *Athan. ep. ad solitariam vitam agentes*: quid est Altare? sedes corporis & sanguinis Christi.

worship,

worſhip, yet I ſhall not limit and bound the word *Altar* to the place and ordinary inſtrument of their uſe: for I ſhall ſay of Tables in private places, as *Bullinger* of fixed Altars, or rather Tables ſo called. *I condemn them, not being uſed to the proper end, and in a right manner.* Only the conveniencie of publick Inſtruments, kept in publick places, to publick ends duly preſerved, I am ſo far from reſtraining the terme Altar, to ſignifie that inſtrument we vulgarly call the Communion Table, that I ſhall with *Peter Martyr* confeſſe the catachreſtical uſe of it by the Fathers, and acknowledge words of this nature thus uſed, may not profit the people, but accidentally draw them to have too reverend an eſteem of Jewiſh, Heatheniſh, and (let me now ſay) Popiſh rites, the ſenſe not being underſtood in the uſe of the word.

Dicta hujuſmodi non ædificârunt plebem, ſed potiùs illam ad Judaicos & Ethnicos ritus impellebant: cum cæcâ quâdam ζηλοτυπία tam à Judæis quàm ab Ethnicis & Alijs ritus mutuarentur. *Pet. Mart. loc. Com. p. 897.*

Having refuſed the *proper ſenſe* of the word Altar, and that reſtrict *improper figurative ſenſe*, uſed in paſt ages of

of the Church, we come now to consider it in a *second improper signification*, in which we shall find it used in Scripture, and that is in a *metonymical and synechdochical sense* of the word *Altar*, which being but an instrument, (though a principal one) of the Worship of God under the Law, is put for the whole and every part of it: and being the signe of it, is often used to expresse *divine Worship signified*, so that we must note the *Altar* used in that sense that a learned man affirmes *Sacrifice* to be used, both words coming from the same root in the Hebrew, which signifies *to sacrifice*, and so the *Altars* are called *Sacrificatories*, and that is for the *whole Worship of God*, *of which the sacrifice on the Altar was a chief part.*

זבח Unde מזבח the very word in the text, est sacrificium vox Hebræa, & speciatim atque propriè de sacrificatione, & generatim pro toto cultu usurpatur, cujus præcipua fere olim pars fuit sacrificium. Vid. Stuch. de sacrificio.

The word *Altar* thus put to expresse *the Worship* of God, we shall finde in many places of the Old, and generally used so in the New Testament; as, *1 Kings* Synecdochicè positum intelligi, quòd cultum divinitùs institutum exturbaverint, protriverint novo idololatrico invecto. *Paræus in Rom.* 11. 3. 19. 14.

19. 14. *Elijah* his complaint of *Ahabs breaking down the Altars of God*, which though it be by some understood literally, in its proper sense; yet by others it is expounded, that *he demolished the Worship of God*, and thus generally the defection of Gods Worship is called *a casting off and forsaking the Altars of God*; and reformation, *a restoring of the same:* and from this metonymical and synechdochical sense, it comes to be metaphorically used to expresse the Worship of God under the Gospel, wherein these instruments of Worship are not at all used, and so in those Prophecies which predict the Propagation of the Gospel, and the Worship of God we finde promised, the Temple and the Covenant of the Priesthood to be restored, and *the Altars of God to be erected*, as in *Jer.* 33. 17, 18, 21. So also the Lord promiseth to *set up his Altar in Egypt*, as in *Isa.* 19. 19. and that *the Egyptians should offer sacrifice unto him*, v. 21. which must needs be understood

Hæc omnia quæ de Altari de votis & sacrificiis hic dicuntur non sunt intelligenda Levitice, sed Evangelicè; Propheta Leviticis verbis significat ea sacra quæ Evangelio Christi docentur. *Bren. in loc.*

derstood of the *Gospel Worship*, which should be and hath been received in *Egypt*, and not in that literal sense apprehended by *Onias* the High Priest, and urged as the great argument to perswade, and indeed did (though with a cleare reluctancy of his own thoughts) prevaile with *Ptolemy Philometor* then King of *Egypt*, to build a Temple there, and according to their zealous ignorance to accomplish this Prophecie as he pretended, although they never proved the accomplishment of this Prophecie in the Egyptians, *speaking the language of Canaan, crying to the Lord, and offering sacrifice and oblations unto him*; as also bringing in the Assyrian to joyne with them, and *Israel* as the third partie; all which are promised to be the concomitants of this *Altar-erection*, and therefore must confirm the former sense of the word *Altar* as taken for the Gospel-worship of God: so it is also used in the 56. chapter of this same Prophecie of *Isaiah*, the seventh verse, * where God promiseth the *sacrifices of the*

Altaris autem nomine utitur ad designandum velut signo cultum Dei: quod sacrificia & oblationes exercitia essent pietatis. *Calv. in loc.*

* *Calv. in loc. Brent.*

ſtranger to be accepted on his Altar, that is, the worſhip they ſhall do unto him through Chriſt; and thus alſo in the New Teſtament, the Worſhip of God is expreſſed by this word Altar, as, 1 Cor. 9. 13. 10. 18. wherein he teacheth, that ſuch as are employed in the Worſhip of God, muſt be maintained by it: and that ſuch as eate of the ſacrifice offered to idols, partake in the worſhip of idols: and ſo the word Altar muſt needs ſignifie the Worſhip of God; in *Matth.* 25. 3. wherein our Saviour by a kinde of *Jewiſh manner of ſpeaking, ſhews the neceſſity of brotherly agreement, before an approach to God in any act of divine Worſhip: and thus is Jeſus Chriſt evangelically diſpenſed, *the Altar* of which the ſubjects of Legal and Levitical diſpenſations *cannot partake*, Heb. 13. 10. ſo that thus you ſee the word Altar, though a legal terme, yet capable of an Evangelical ſignification, not only as it hath been uſed by the Profeſſors of the Goſpel, to expreſſe and ſignifie *the Table*, on which the bread and wine

*Loqnitur more ſeculi, quando oblationes omnis generis ſacrificiorum adhuc in uſu erant; totum vero Dei cultum comprehendit extremum. *Gualt. in loc. ſic Calv. Par. Aretius & Dionyſ. Carthuſ.*

wine is set in the Lords Supper; but also as it signifies *the whole Worship* of God; and in this sense I understand it in the doctrine, and shall desire to be understood in the whole discourse about it: for as the Worship of God was amongst the Jewes, corrupted and declined by the building of any Altars, besides the one only Altar prescribed by the Lord: so under the Gospel, all innovation of principles and practices, over and above, below or beside the prescribed Worship of God in his Word, I conclude to *be a rebelling against the Lord and his People, by building an Altar besides the Altar of God*; for that to build a sinful Altar besides the Altar of God, is in the language of the Psalmist to defile our selves *with our own works, and to go a whoring after our own inventions*: it is to refuse to own the object to be the Author of divine Worship, to be regulated by any other Law, then our own reason dictates, and will determines, and so to set up against God and his people, that ἐθελοθρησκείαν, superstition and will-worship which the Apostle

Religio supra statutum, quæ in præceptis humanis fundata & ex iis pendet ac constituitur.

dehorts the Christians from, *Col.* 2. 23. and this was a sin not only committed under the Law and Levitical Worship of God, but may also be committed under the Gospel: I, and hath been; for the Fathers in the primitive times were wont to observe and declare the Arrians, Novatians, Donatists, and other schismatic; hereticks, disturbing the peace of the Church, corrupting the doctrine of faith and Worship of God, *Altare adversus Altare erigere*, to build Altars besides the Altars of God. And that you may the better understand the same, I shall briefly shew you how Altars may be built, either materially, objectively, or formally.

First, Altars may be built against the Altars of God *materially*, as when *any other matter is innovated and introduced into the Lords Worship, as an essential part thereof, which the Lord himself never prescribed or required*: and thus under the Law, the Jewes are sadly complained of, and condemned, for the *multiplying of their Altars as their Cities*, Jer. 11. 13. and *according to the multitude of their fruit*, Hos. 10. 1. which were no other then

then material organs of divine Worſhip, diſtinct from that one, by which alone God would be adored: ſuch as theſe were *Jeroboams* two Altars at *Dan* and *Bethel*, and ſuch as generally all the uſurping Princes of the ten tribes of *Iſrael*, and ſome of the Kings of *Judah* did erect. And under the Goſpel we may obſerve the guilt of this ſin charged on ſuch as called themſelves true, but are branded for falſe Apoſtles, 2 *Cor.* 11.13. in that they impoſed on the Chriſtians Circumciſion, and the Levitical Law as eſſential parts of Gods Worſhip, whileſt it was a matter in abrogating and aboliſhing, though it had formerly been eſtabliſhed: ſuch are cautiouſly ſeen unto by the Church at *Antioch*: and conſiderately condemned by the Councel of the Church convened at *Jeruſalem*: Acts 15. 24. for that they troubled the people of God, and * *ſubverted* their ſouls from the proper preſcribed Worſhip of God. Theſe Saint *Paul* in all his Epiſtles, to *Corinth*, *Galatia*, *Epheſus*, *Coloſſe*, or others, writes againſt, as ſub-

* ἀνασκευάζοντες τὰς ψυχάς, Unde argumenta ἀνασκευάσιμα apud dialecticos ſint argumenta ad deſtructionem. *Lorin.*

verterers of the ſincere Worſhip of God received, and Innovators of their own inventions and impoſitions, therefore called a will-worſhip, *Col.* 2.23. This innovation or rather retention of the matter of Levitical Worſhip under the Goſpel, is by the Authour to the *Hebrewes*, ſet in a diametrical oppoſition (thorough the whole Epiſtle) *to the Goſpel-Altar of God*, and declared to be ſo ſinful, as was inconſiſtent *with participation in the Chriſtians Altar*, in *Heb.* 13. 10. Thus alſo the Papiſts innovating the croſſing ceremony, ſanctifying water, the five ſacraments, ſacrifice of the Altar, the *Ave Maria*, prayers to Saints, and the like matters, as eſſential parts of divine Worſhip, do clearly *in the very matter build Altars beſides the Altars of God*: ſo that if the Miniſters of God do offer unto God any other matter as acts of divine Worſhip, their Miniſtery will not ſanctifie their action, but their innovation makes them ſubject to the guilt of *Altar-building*, whileſt the matter of their offering be like to the fire of *Nadab* and *Abihu*, ſtrange fire before the Lord.

Lev. 10. 1, 2.

Secondly, this ſin of building Altars, be-

beſides the Altars of the Lord, may be committed *objectively*, when the very material Altar continuing, *is diverted from its proper object, unto ſuch, as not being Gods, cannot be the object of divine Worſhip*: as when the Temple is uſed to idolatry, the incenſe of the Lord is ſmoaking before idols, the ſacrifices of God are offered unto *Baal*, and the like; all which, though in themſelves the very Altar and proper matter of the Lords divine Worſhip: yet not being duly tendred to him, is the *building of an Altar beſides his Altar*; this ſin was committed by *Manaſſeh*, in diverting the Temple to idolatry: and is expreſly digitated to *Ezekiel*, when God ſhewes him the *defilements of his Sanctuary, the cloud of incenſe aſcending before the images, and the twenty five men worſhipping, not God, but the Sun*, Ezek. 8. And of this God complaineth, (*viz.*) that they had defiled his Sanctuary, when they brought in their idol-ſervice into his holy place, *Ezek.* 5. 11, 23, 38. for the Temple of *Jeruſalem* was not the Temple of the Lord, whileſt diverted to idols, any more then the temples of *Apollo*, or other heatheniſh gods are ſuch, when by Chri-

ſtians they are diſpoſed into convenient places, for the Aſſemblies of Gods people to worſhip in: ſo that now under the Goſpel, to give divine Worſhip to any but the true God in Chriſt, is to build Altars againſt him, and deſtroy his; for though prayer be a part of Gods Sacrifice and Worſhip, yet it is not ſo, nay, it is oppoſite thereunto, if *Darius* the King, the *Lady Mary*, *Peter*, *Paul*, or any other Saint whatſoever be the object thereof: and ſo the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, a great part of Gods Goſpel-Altar, ceaſeth ſo to be by the offering it unto God, as one to be appeaſed, ſatisfied and reconciled by a ſacrifice; and not as one already ſatisfied and appeaſed; nay, it is by the change of the object, changed in its owne nature, and of Divine made will-worſhip.

Thirdly, *Altars* may be built beſides the Altars of God, *formally*: when the very Altar, ſacrifice, incenſe, and every matter of the Lords Worſhip is retained, and performed to the very object of divine Worſhip, the true God *in a falſe manner of adminiſtration*: matter miſcarrying in the forme is changed, as to

its

its nature; for the axiome is true, that *forma dat eſſentiam*: the forme denominates the thing κατὰ τὸ, according to that which it is, diſtinguiſheth it from other things, and indeed makes it to be what it is; for the matter is indeed the *principium paſſivum*, capable of being whatſoever the forme doth make it; being the *principuum activum:* and thus the ſlaying of beaſts by private men is no more then a moral act of ſlaughter, which when done by the Prieſt, is the religious act of *Sacrifice:* and ſo under the Law, *Sauls* offering of beaſts in ſacrifice, is ſo far from being divine Worſhip, that it is denominated diſobedience, becauſe not done according to the preſcribed forme of God, who not only ordains the matter of his Worſhip, but alſo the manner and forme thereof: and in this ſenſe the ſin of *Corah* and his company may be ſaid to be the *erecting of an Altar beſides the Lords Altar*, when by the gathering of a *guedah* or Congregation out of the Congregation, they did ſeparate from the Church of God, and on the pretence of Piety crying

Forma eſt principium activum per quam res eſt, diſtinguitur ab aliis, denominatur, & operatur.

1 Sam. 15. 22, 23

ing up all the people as holy, *invade the Miniſterial deſpenſation of God without due forme and order*: whereby they provoked the Lord to vindicate the formal adminiſtration of his Ordinances by the ſeverity of his judgements on them, and by his Statute concerning their cenſers, that they ſhould be plates of memorial, that no ſtranger, not of the ſeed of *Aaron* formally called, preſume to celebrate divine Worſhip: and their ſin the Apoſtle *Jude* in his general Epiſtle notes, to have been committed under the Goſpel; and in all the action we finde no change of the matter, but only the miſcarriage of the manner in a ſeparate way, by ſuch as were not formal Miniſters. An act like unto this was that of *Uzzahs*, in 2 *Sam.* 6. 8. in laying hold upon the Ark of God not formally called: *the danger of religions ruine will be no warrant for men not formally called to it, miniſterially to ſupport and ſave it.*

Numb. 16
Pſal. 106.
16, 17.

The great aggravation of *Jeroboams* ſin and evidence of his *Altars to be againſt the Altar of God*, was his expulſion of ſuch as were formally called to celebrate divine Worſhip, and eſtabliſhing

of

of his uſurped Magiſtracy, by an uſurped Miniſtery, (*for he that would, made himſelf a Prieſt*, to adminiſter ſacred actions contrary to Gods ſtanding Law, and ſignal ſeverity on *Corah* and his company for this ſin) as we at large ſee in 2 *Coron.* 13. 9, 10. whileſt *Abijah* declareth *Judah* to retain the truth of Gods Worſhip and Altar, not only in the matter and object, but the forme and manner thereof by the *ſtanding Miniſtery of God.* And as we finde the privation of the forme under the Law in ſacred diſpenſations, to be *principium tranſmutationis*, the changing of the nature of the Ordinance of God, from holy to profane: ſo alſo we ſhall ſee it to be under the Goſpel; for though adjuration in the Name of Jeſus be in it ſelf a ſacred action, yet when diſorderly and precipitately without * formal authority uſed by the *Exorciſts*, it will provoke the devil himſelf to juſtifie the power of Jeſus and *Paul*, but to torment theſe uſurping Intruders, *Act* 19. 13, 14, 15, 16. The neglect of the formal adminiſtration of the Lords Supper in the Church

* Legitima autem nominis Dei & Chriſti invocatio eſt, quæ fide dirigitur, nec excedit vocationis metas. *Calvin loc.*

Church of *Corinth*, will engage a sincere *Paul* to affirm positively, it is * *not to eate the Lords Supper* at all; for the forme destroyed the entity which must be restored by a formal returne to the first sacred institution: and I cannot but observe the care and paines taken by the Authour of the Epistle to the *Hebrewes*, in asserting the *formal inauguration*, and exercise of the Lord Jesus in the work of the High Priest towards God, that he might convince the Jews that he was no usurping Impostor, but really and formally the High Priest expected, especially in the fifth chapter of the Epistle.

1 Cor. 11. 20, Negat eos tunc edere Cœnam Dominicam quia illegitimè edere, sit non edere. *Par. in loc.*

So that hereby we may see that men may provoke God *by their own inventions*, and go a whoring after their *own wayes*, in not only adulterating the *matter*, but also the very *manner* of the Lords worship: and this must needs be a grievous sin in Altar-building, to make Gods Altar to stand against it self, nay, whilest it seemes to be (and so is more apt to seduce,) what indeed for want of *ministerial authority*, and *formal dispensation*

it

it is not: thus the Aſſemblies of the *Novatians*, *Donatiſts* and *Arrians*, though uſing Word, Prayer and Sacraments, were denominated *builders of Altars*: for that action, which is ſacred in the hands of a Miniſter, is but common in the hands of private men: the Lords Supper duely adminiſtred by a lawful Miniſter thereunto ordained, will be but at the beſt a *Corinthian* love-feaſt in a *John of Leydens hand*: and Baptiſme a ſacred ſigne and ſealing part of Gods Worſhip, when adminiſtred by a lawful Miniſter in the Aſſemblies of Gods people, will be (to uſe, but not to own the Anabaptiſts phraſe) but *baby-waſhing by a Midwife*, and but meer waſhing of the body *by the loweſt of the people*, renouncing or never receiving Miniſterial authority: preaching of the Word, the great part of Gods publick worſhip in the mouth of a Miniſter, will be but the ſimple ſpeaking of things as good or true, but not as engaged by office to enforce with authority by a private man. Having thus given you to ſee what I underſtand by Altars, and the different wayes whereby they may be built,

built, besides the Altar of God. I shall close this first part of the illustration of the Point, with this sad observation which I cannot be silent in, *viz.* that *the corruption of our nature and times is apt to carry us from one extream to another.* Whilest we are reforming material innovations, we run after a superstitious manner of administration of sacred worship; and though we lately, and yet loudly cried for the purity of Gods Altar, yet we are apt to destroy the power, by taking away the Priestly ministerial authority thereof, which must concur to make actions sacred, and parts of divine worship.

As the learned *Didaclavius*, aliàs *Catherwood* did denominate the late corruptions of the Church of *England*.

I come now in the next place to shew you what must be done by sincere worshippers of God, that they may discharge their duty of *fleing to this sin of Altar-building*, in the resolution of which I shall dictate some few directions from the precedent in this chapter; wherein if we observe the carriage of the ten tribes on this conceived act of *Altar-building*, we shall finde these duties to be done by such as would flee to this sin.

First, *they must satisfie themselves of the*

the certainty of ſuch an act to be in agitation; they muſt take cognizance of the fact before they condemn it: they muſt have eares and eyes open to attend to reports, and obſerve actions; and hearts rightly acted to apprehend and determine the nature of ſuch things as they hear and ſee; they muſt not ſhut their eyes at all affairs abroad becauſe of their own liberty at home: nor live at peace themſelves, and leave all others to ſerve God as they liſt; but knowing that there is but one God, and one Altar or way of worſhip, they muſt ſee whether all that call themſelves by the Name of the *God of Jacob*, do wait on him at that one *Altar*, or erect any other to any ſinful end. Thus we ſhall finde the ten tribes carrie towards their brethren; they are ſo farre from condemning complaints of this nature, and contending for the liberty of the men, that they take notice of rumours, and are ready to fire their beacons on a bare report: ſee, *v.* 11, 12, *they heard ſay*, and begin to ſtir; yet they run not raſhly upon a bare report to ruine their brethren, but ſend choſen men to require and receive an account of the work in hand, by them ſuſpected to be

ſin-

ſinful Altar-building: who returning ſatisfied in themſelves, do alſo ſatisfie the Congregation; ſo that the firſt thing to be done, is to ſearch out the certainty of the thing: that by ſinful ſilence occaſioned by non-obſervance, they indulge not *building Altars beſides the Altars of God*, on the one hand, or on the other run raſhly on the ruine of their brethren, condemning without conviction, the generation of the innocent in a juſt action.

Secondly, they muſt *ſenſibly affect themſelves with the nature of the ſin and the ſad aggravations thereof.* The hiding of ſin under the tongue ſhews that it is ſweet in the mouth, and reſolved to be kept and ſpared. Sins aggravation is the ſoules exaſperation againſt it, wherein it is extenuated the heart is not affected with ſorrow for it, or zeal againſt it: *Nehemiah* ſeeing to the reformation of the Sabbath of the Lord, heightens the ſin to his own and the peoples ſenſe; *What evil is it that you do? did not your fathers thus? did not God bring all this evil for this ſin? will ye yet bring the wrath of God on us?* So the ſincere worſhippers of God in the text, contending againſt the

Job. 20. 12, 13.

Ne. 13. 17

the suspitious act aggravate it very much, calling it *a trespasse committed, a turning away from the Lord, rebellion against God and their brethren*, considering it to be a provocation of divine wrath, parallelling it with *Achans sinne*; and making it the more grievous, because of the hand of God yet on them for the late sinne of *Baal-peor*; in resisting the sinne of *Altar-building*; we must then not abate, but aggravate the sinful nature thereof; for aggravations extract sorrow and emulate zeal. Vers. 16, 17, 18. of this chap.

Thirdly, *seasonably caution, and seriously counsel the desistance of so sinful a designe*; all meanes must be used to cure the wound before it be pronounced *immedicabile vulnus ense recidendum*, incurable: for although to suffer obstinacy against advice, were sinful indulgence; yet to strike precipitately without solid conviction, and serious counsel to desist, is no better then Papal tyranny. Sincere worshippers must in contending for Gods Altar, be actuated by Gods counsel, to give *first and second admonition* before the rejection of *an heretick*, and imitate the pattern of Gods patience, in warning Tit. 3. 10.

and wooing before they war: ſin perſiſted in againſt counſels and cautions, pleads the equity and neceſſity of juſtice and ſeverity: whileſt the purſuit of iniquity without theſe preventing means bears the complexion of paſſionate, and prejudged executions: and therefore the ten tribes though aſſembled with ſword in hand, and purpoſe in heart to correct this ſuppoſed ſinne: check their courage, and command a ſtay to their proceedings, till they counſel their brethrens ceaſing from ſo ſinful a deſigne by the embaſſie of *Phinehas*, and his aſſociates.

Fourthly, *ſpeedily accommodate our brethren with a removal of what ariſeth from our ſelves as an accidental temptation to the ſinne, and may ſafely be removed*: ſelf-intereſt is alwayes a ſad obſtructer of ſincere contentions for Gods worſhip: when ſelf-denial ſets Gods Altar above all our own enjoyments, and commands a condeſcenſion of the loweſt and hardeſt ſuffering tearms that may anticipate poſitive and direct ſinne: Sincere worſhippers muſt have a *Pauls* ſpirit, to become all things to all men, that all men may in ſincerity obey the Go-

Gospel of Christ; who will rather *never eat flesh* then any shall thence take occasion *to refuse or recede from Christianity*: who will rather labour with his hands then that the burthen of Gods worship shall make it be distasteful (though he have power to expect, if not exact maintenance) and like unto the tenne Tribes in the Text, who will rather though to the diminution of their already divided inheritances, admit another division, and allow * a portion for their brethren, then that they shall divide from the Altar of God: Knowing that it is better for them to admit poverty then profaneneſſe. Groundleſſe ſcrupuloſity ſometimes doth (as in the caſe in the Text it was conjectured to have done) engage men to ſchiſme and ſeparation from the ſincere worſhip of God; therefore wherein the pretended cauſe, though clearly accidental, may with ſome diſadvantages as to our own enjoyments be removed; the care of ſuch

* Credibile eſt pleraſque tribus non nimis laxe habitaviſſe, cum tot paſſim eſſent Cananæi; & tamen genteſi ob hominum multitudinem à re pecuniaria copioſiſſima ſedibus atque poſſeſſionibus recipere; ſibique urbes atque agros quæ illis attribuunt detrahere malunt, quam ut adeo tradita religionis jura mutari aut pollui ab illis paucis tribubus ſinant. *Ataſ. in Joſ.* 22. 19.

as contend for the conservation of the Altars of God, must be to see it done, and condescend to the same: that thereby they may shew to the silencing of the sinners, it is simple purity of Gods worship they pursue.

The fifth and last duty, inferred from this very story, to be done by sincere worshippers of God in their contending for the Altars of God, is *zealously to resist the sinne of Altar-buildings*: this is the part of their duty the loud cries of generall liberty amongst us doth decrie: yet it must be done: * every one being bound in his proper place, and according to his capacity, to approve themselves true attendants on Gods Altar and Sanctuary, by withstanding sinne in the *genus* of it, and so in every particular *species*, eminently attempting to restraine schisme from the Church, and sad apostasies from the worship of God. Although we do not see, or say that strangers to the God, and Altar of *Israel* were to be by force compelled to become proselytes to their religion, and to worship at their Altar: yet what is clearer in all the story of the Church then that they were to be

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*Non dubium est quin sancto zelo excanduerint; non omnibus quidem datus gladius in manum sed pro sua quisque vocatione et officio viriliter & constanter studeat purum religionis statum contra omnes corruptelas. *Calv. in text.*

* restrained from worshipping at any other Altar, or any other god in the midst of them: how much more cleare is it that all defection, or backsliding from the worship and Altar of God by such as were joyned under the visible administration of his Covenant, was with a Spirit of zeal and a strong hand to be restrained? Is not this in this very story, so very clear, that he that runs may read? See we not the people of the ten Tribes generally assembled with power in hand, and purpose in heart to impede the suspected sinne, and so to keep in due order of attendance on Gods Altar? Is it not to this end that God hath invested his Church with authority, and censures, and requires the due execution thereof, that by fear men may be forced from sinne? Is not the cutting off the troublers of Gods Church, rejection of hereticks, casting off and delivering up to Satan for the buffetting of the flesh, the very act of this resistance? Was it not the discharge of this duty that emulated the Apostles in their dayes, and succeeding 1 Cor. 5.

* Judæi neminem proselytum faciebant donabantve jure suæ gentis nisi prius sese circumcidisset, Legem Mosis recepisset & eorum sacrificiis communicasset. *Pet. Mart. loc. com. p.* 204.

ceeding faithful Ministers of the Gospel,
Gal. 5.12. Tit. 3.10 by the Authority of Christ to withstand the false Apostles, and seducing teachers of their times, as *sinful Altar-builders*, that this lies as a duty on the authority of the Church is generally granted by all, even by such as deny the same to be a duty in the Magistrate, which at this time is not my part or purpose to dispute, having been done by more able men, and that very fully; that onely which I would dictate is, that in general every professed sincere worshipper of God, is to approve himself such, not onely by cautionating against, or counselling from, but also in his place, and according to his capacity, in contending against the sinne of Altar-building, as private Christians by friendly objurgations, and discountenancing the same, even by drawing from communion and otherwise, when duly called: Ministers of the Church by reproving, condemning and censuring, nay if thereunto called, defending the place of Gods worship against their entrance into the same, to correct their sin, as did *Alexander* that famous Bishop of *Constantinople*, and undergoing not onely censures

cenſures of bitterneſſe and violence, but even baniſhments and ſaddeſt ſufferings, as did *Athanaſius* Biſhop of *Alexandria* in withſtanding the *Arrians*: and when I conſider Chriſtian Magiſtrates waiting on the Altar of God by the fulneſſe of their power, and influence of their authority on the ſons of men, to be in the fitteſt capacity to manage to the purpoſe this reſiſtance. I cannot ſee (whatever others ſay to the contrary) how to exempt them from the approving themſelves ſincere worſhippers at Gods Altar, by the faithful and zealous diſcharge of this duty.

Thus then I have done with the ſecond thing to be illuſtrated, and have ſhewed you what duties lie on the ſincere worſhippers of God in ſeeing to the ſin of Altar-building, and you ſee they muſt, 1. See it. 2. Be ſenſibly affected with it. 3. Speedily cautionate from it. 4. Seaſonably remove accidental occaſions as farre as may be. 5. Zealouſly reſiſt when other means will not availe, that ſo they may not ſhare in their guilt. I now come to the confirmation of the Point thus illuſtrated, by giving the reaſons of it.

The reasons, why the building of Altars besides the Altar of God is to be so seasonably seene unto by the sincere worshippers of God, I shall briefly comprehend under one general head, and that is this:

To *build Altars besides the Altar of God is a sinne exceeding sinful:* it is sufficient to emulate a sanctified heart against it, to assert it simply to be a sin, though of the lowest order; for saving grace doth militate against sinne as such, not as it is more or lesse grievous: yet how much more fervently and fully will it bend it self against sinne, as it appears aggravated, vile, and exceeding sinneful, more eminently and immediately dishonouring God, provoking fury, scandalizing religion, and sadly dividing the Churches of God? of which nature, to the emulating of zeal, and engaging the strength of sincere worshippers of God against it, I shall labour to let the people of God see this sinne of Altar-building to be; and that in the consideration of the grounds, actings, effects, and sad aggravations thereof.

First, Altar-building besides the Altar

of

of God, will appeare a sin exceeding sinfull, if we consider the *sinneful grounds* from whence it springs and ariseth; amongst others we may specially take notice of these three common causes thereof.

First, *shameful novelty*; that frame of spirit which for its vilenesse is noted to be the effect of idlenesse and want of serious imployment which might fix the soul; this is that frame of Spirit which renders a man weary of every thing though in it self never so good: whereby men become *Athenians* to give up themselves to things as they are *new*, rather then as they *are good*, and enquire after *Pauls* Doctrine *as new*, and so suitable to their curiosities rather then *as true* and saving to their souls; the which although noted as an occasion of *Pauls* preaching, yet is taxed as an evidence of their vanity who minded nothing else but novelties, which might be vanities according to the Greek proverb πολλὰ καινὰ πολλὰ κακὰ, Novelties commonly are vanities. This is that shameful sinne which brings a distaste on the most pleasant object *, and placeth affection on that which is more base:

1. Ground

* Variam dant otia mentem.

Act. 17. 19

* Apparet etiam quare tantopere novæ res

placeant, quoniam mens cum primum quippiam nobile ac præstans affert se contemplandum, acriter & attente ipsum intuetur, quo cognito de studio remittit, ideo voluptas desinit: verum si priori objecto aliquid recens supponatur, denuo intelligentia contendit studium ea contemplando, & voluptas redit, atque hoc pacto semper rebus novis oblectamus. *Pet. Mart. loc. com. p.* 330.

base: a disposition more fit for babes and children, then men of discretion, who should embrace by reason: this novelty is the mother of sedition in States and Republicks, which a wise *Lycurgus* will labour to anticipate by his perpetual absence from his *Lacedemonian* subjects engaged to constancy of obedience till his return: and chiefest politicians, by assenting to *Plato* his direction, and seeing that *ne quid in rebus ad religionem attinentibus innovetur*, that novelties in religion be not admitted. In a word, such is the vileness of this novellous temper, that Satan cannot endure his wayes and doctrines to be charged with novelty, which he therfore cloaks with the plea, and brings in with the loud cry of *Antiquity*, whilest he makes the truths, and wayes of God distastful with the charge of * *novelty*, which needs no clearer proof then the Papists contention for their shameful absurdities, and horrid innovations with

* *Paulus Samosatenus* cast the *Psalmes* out of the Church as new found figments of late Writers. *Euseb. Hist. lib.* 7. *cap.* 29.

the

the pretence of antiquity, whileſt their common captious calumniating queſtion againſt the true Churches doctrine and worſhip of God is, *Where was Proteſtant religion before* Luthers *time?* this ſinful frame of ſpirit, this ſhameful inconſtancy of the ſoule in its object and wearineſſe of any thing, though in it ſelf never ſo good, when a little old is clearly in Scripture dictated to be the cauſe or reaſon of building Altars againſt the Altars of God. God expreſſely charged it on the *Jews*, that being more novellous then other Nations they had changed their glory into that which would not profit, *Jer.*2.11. When thou didſt nothing elſe but build other Altars unto Idol-gods: which in this very regard, to note this very ground of following them, by forſaking God, are called *new gods, that came newly up, whom their fathers feared not.* As in *Deut.* 32.17. And when God calls them off from this ſinne of Altar-building, we may finde him correcting their novelty, as that which led them into the ſin, by calling on them to enquire after the good way, and *the old*, and walk therein, *Jer.*6.16. and many times he pleads

pleads his antiquity as a Creator, and as their Redeemer to confirm against Babylonish idolatry, and curb their novelty in acting this sinne: thus and to this end is God opposed to idols with expostulating tearmes: *Have ye not heard? hath it not beene told you from the beginning?* have you not understood *from the foundations of the earth*, that I as *the everlasting Creator of all things*, am the sole and onely object of Altar-worship? * *Isa.* 40. from *ver.* 18. to the end of *chap.* 41. at large to be seen; and so also we shall finde the sin of Gospel-Altar-building in turning away from the doctrine and worship of the Gospel to be expressely grounded on, and flowing from this shameful novellous property: the Apostle useth no enigmatical tearmes when he makes this sinful, base disposition, and its effects the argument to excite faithful Ministers of Christ to approve themselves sincere worshippers of God, by zealous and diligent preaching, in season and out of season; for the time will come

* Non habetis novitium Deum, sed eum ipsum qui *Abrahamo*, *Mosi*, patribusque ab initio patefecit, & certe non parva hinc confirmatio accedit, quod vetustas doctrinæ nobis constat quæ per tot secula inter fideles continuata est. *Calv. in loc.*

come when men *having itching ears*, given wholly to novelty, (not to be pleased for their delicacy) will turne from the Altar of God not *enduring sound Doctrine*, but will set up new Altars according to their own lusts, by the *heap of teachers gotten* to themselves, * 2 *Tim.* 4. 3, 4. So that shameful novelty to be the ground of this grand iniquity we see clearly and positively asserted in Scripture, to which we might adde the experimented disposition of such in all ages of the Church of God, who declining the sincere Word and worship of the Lord, and dividing from the society of sincere worshippers, have by the distastes of sound doctrines, and inconstancy in their own opposed principles and practices embracing and with zeale advancing for truth to day, that which with no lesse zeale shall be condemned for errour to morrow: increasing to themselves teachers, and desirous to heare every one speak, though they will know none to *be over them in the Lord*: being (in a word apt) *to try all things*, but never to determine any thing, *to hold it fast as good*: approve themselves men acted by no other principle then novelty:

but

* Causam tanti mali dum vult assignare, eleganti Metaphora utitur, qua significat tam delicatis auribus mundum fore, tamq; rerum novarum perperam cupidis, ut varios sibi magistros accumulet atque ad nova identidem figmenta circumferatur. *Calv. in loc.*

but thus much may ſuffice (I hope) to convince, that Altar-buildings many times comes from this very ground ſhameful, ſinful, childiſh novelty, which as you heard is ſo vile, as to make a people to decline their God long nay, alwayes enjoyed and approved merciful and gracious to them, to imbrace thoſe novellous vanities which are but momentany, and with which they were not acquainted: but I muſt paſſe to the conſideration of the ſecond ground, or cauſe of Altar-building, which we ſhall finde no leſſe ſinful to the aggravation of this effect.

2. Ground The ſecond ground of Altar-building is *ſwelling pride*, that diabolical diſpoſition that put the evil Angels on an oppoſition of their Creator, from their very beginning to build their own Kingdome: that high frame of ſpirit which admits no peeres, much leſſe ſuperiours: that boundleſſe property that cannot endure to be preſcribed by any rules, or confined within any banks: which advancing its own inventions will contend with men, nay, as much as may be with their ſovereigne Creatour for Maſtery, to which nothing but ſingularity and

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ſuperiority can give ſatisfaction. In a word, that curſed principle, which ſucks nouriſhment from Gods greateſt mercies, and moſt gracious favours; and when ſtrengthened thereby, manageth a reſiſtance of his ſacred pleaſures, and ſtruggles to ſeat it ſelf in the divine chair, much more eaſily to preſcribe the form and bounds of that obedience which it will yield; this is a root ſo notoriouſly vile, that none will own it but where it reignes be ready to excuſe, I and with ſeeeming zeal condemne it: its evil nature is ſo fully known as well by the light of nature and long experience, as by the law of God, that to enlarge on the diſcovery of its vileneſſe were almoſt loſt labour: yet from this odious and abominable root doth ſpring this curſed branch of Altar-building: which muſt needs ſavour of that ſeed it doth extract: this was the principle that put forward *Corah and his company* to gather a *Gnedah* out of a *Gnedah*, *a Congregation out of a Congregration*, and to build an Altar againſt the Altar of God, by declining, nay, diverting the formal adminiſtration of divine worſhip in the hand of *Aaron*; for we ſee not that they went about Num. 16.

to

to renounce the material Altar of God: who can obſerve their ſtubborn refuſal to come, when *Moſes* called, with a proud, though unjuſt recrimination on *Moſes*, their puffed up ſpirits expreſſed in their plea of univerſal holineſſe, with which they being too highly affected durſt argue againſt order and priority, and think al above them to *take too much upon them*: who can conſider the ſeverity of Gods judgement, and their cenſers made ſignes and monuments of caution to humility for future generations, and not be clearly convinced that *pride was the root of all their evil of ſinne*, which cauſed their ſorrow? *Moſes* charged this ſin of Altar-building in the declining of the Altar of the true God, and ſetting up Altars to their new gods to be the overflowing effect of the *Jews ſwelling pride*, when he digitates the time of this abomination to be when *Jeſuron was waxed fat*: and expreſſely notes to have been the cauſe thereof, *Deut.* 32.15,16,17. And as this evil diſpoſition drew ſtrength from God increaſing mercies in after-ages, ſo alſo did increaſe this ſinne of Altar-building cauſing the ſad complaints of the Prophets in *Hoſ.*10.1.

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according to the multitude of fruit they have increased their Altars. Throughout the Old Testament, whensoever God by his servants reproves this sin, he aggravates the same by the expressions of their pride, as in *Is.* 65. from the 2. to the 5. verse. And in the New Testament, we finde Apostates, Seducers, Innovators in to the Lords Word and Worship, stigmatized with this brand of pride, the Apostle *Paul*, describing such as labour to draw aside silly women, and to set up their own Altar, saith of them among other properties that apt them for this work, that they are *proud, heady, high-minded*, in 2 *Tim.* 3. 2, 4. and in his first Epistle, the sixth chapter, the third and fourth verses, notes, that such as teach otherwise, and tonsent not to wholesome doctrine, are *puft up, knowing nothing*, and that he may clearly evidence that this proud propertie produceth a declining of the Altar of God, and building others, he labours to anticipate this sad effect by a necessary caution concerning the cause, in such as take the charge of the Churches of God,* 1 *Tim.* 3.6. where he adviseth, *that a Bishop be not a novice.*

*Non νέον, sed νεόφυτον prohibet apostolus, quales erant Catechumeni. *Calv.*

ungrounded in the principles of Religion, and that for this very cause, *lest he be proud, and so fall into the snare of the devil.* The Apostle *Peter*, in his second Epistle, the second chapter, sets out seducers with the same characters, *They speak evil of dignities, and of what they know not, and speak great swelling words of vanity.* And *Jude* omits not this propertie, when he asserts them *to despise Governments, and to speak evil of dignities*, to speak proud things; and analogically asserts their way to be the *gain-saying of Corah.* But to close up what might be more largely spoken to evidence this graceless propertie, to be the ground of this grand iniquity, that might appear grievous in the eyes of the sincerely gracious; I will only adde this one general observation, (*viz.*) the sin of Altar-building never was so eminently acted in the Churches of God, before or since the Gospel preached, Christ come in flesh, as when the peace and prosperities of the world had procreated and matured pride. In the Church of the Jews it is evident, whilest they were beset with wars and troubles, though by some men and at some times this

this ſin was acted, yet *Solomons* peace, plenty and glory, was attended with the eminencie of encreaſing various and glorious *Altars, to Aſhteroth and Milcom, and the gods of the Nations, to which his wives were related.* And in the Chriſtian Church, who knowes not that the ten preſſing perſecutions did generally by the humility of the Churches, conſerve purity of Word and Ordinances, notwithſtanding the ſometime endeavours of particular hereticks, to ſubvert the ſame until the Churches peace and proſperity, conferred by *Conſtantine* the Chriſtian Emperour, gave occaſion for the proud man of ſin to appeare, and advance his abominations, increaſing his Altars, to the very caſting down of the Altar of God, in the greateſt part of the Chriſtian world, giving the Church, on ſad experience to complain the truth of that ſaying, reported to be heard from heaven; *Hodie venenum infunditur in Eccleſiam*, Now is the poiſon of pride poured into the boſome of the Church: nay, my brethren,

As *Paulus Samoſatenus*, who having unjuſtly gained riches, and puffed up with pride, uſurp'd ſecular dignities, and made himſelf a lofty ſeat and ſtately throne, after the manner of the Princes of the world, exacting obeiſance

from the people by check and reviling termes: not much unlike *John of Leyden.*

it is well, if we finde not on serious observation, this sin to be admitted and advanced by such, as present prosperity and external glory hath lifted up. And so I have done with the second ground of Altar building, which must needs evidence it to be exceeding sinful, whilest acted from such vile principles: I now passe to the third and last ground of this sin: and that is

Third grownd of Altar-building.

Self-advancement and advantage: that cursed principle, which is inconsistent with sincere affections to God and his worship: which hurrieth a man forward by right or wrong, to establish his own glory, and possesse himself of creature transitory enjoyments: this is that which will make a man active for God, and his Altar, so long as ambitious self can in that way obtain its object: but that once missed or obtained, affections abate, nay, are altogether alienated from the wayes of God: this useth Religion on a Machivillan account, to establish their own throne, and keep up their own glory; so that whatsoever is but serviceable to this base end, though but for a season, that shall be embraced and advanced. In a word,

this

this is that curſed principle decried by Chriſt, in ſuch as take upon them the Profeſſion of his Name, as that which unfits them for adherentie to his Altar: yet this we ſhall finde clearly to be a ground of this grievous ſin of Altar-building, if we do but conſider, how *the wages of unrighteouſneſſe engaged Balaam*, to go contrary to Gods Will, and by building many Altars in different places to attempt the curſing of *Iſrael*, contrary to Gods declared pleaſure, as in *Numb.* 22. 23. *chap.* is to be ſeen; in which regard ſeducing Apoſtates, under the Goſpel Altar-builders, acted by this principle of ſelf-advantage and advancement, are ſaid *to follow the way of Balaam, who loved the wages of unrighteouſneſſe*, 2 Pet. 2. 15. and to be caſt away by the deceit of *Balaams wages*, Jude 11. ſo alſo we ſhall finde this principle provoking this ſin of Altar-building in *Jeroboam*, when he rebelled againſt the houſe of *David*, and made *Iſrael* to ſin in the ſame way with himſelf: if we do but obſerve the Holy Ghoſt expreſſely noting his erection of a uſurped Miniſtery, to this very end, that he might ſtabliſh his u-

ſurped Magiſtracie, and his ſetting up his Altars at *Dan* and *Bethel*, to be grounded on his deſire and deſign, to ſettle the Crown on his rebellious head; *for*, ſaith the text, *Jeroboam thought in his heart, If this people go up and do ſacrifice at Jeruſalem, then ſhall the heart of this people turn again unto their Lord, even to Rehoboam King of Judah, ſo ſhall they kill me, and go again to Rehoboam: wherepon the King took counſel, &c.* 1 Kings 12. 26, 27, 28. *et ad finem capitis*: for uſurpers know, that the ſincere Worſhip of God teacheth due ſubjection to their lawful Soveraignes: this ſelf-eſtabliſhment is declared to be the cauſe of *Ahaz* ſinful Altar-building: who (his faith not fixed in the living God of *Iſrael*.) feared his approaching fall, and hoping to eſtabliſh his throne, built Altars to the gods of *Damaſcus*; as we ſee, 2 *Chron.* 28. 23, 24. This curſed principle of ſelf-advancement was it, which did actuate the ſpirit of *Jehu*, with readineſſe and reſolution to do the work of the Lord, to the demoliſhing of the houſe, and deſtruction of the Prieſts of *Baal*, ſo as to call *Jonadab to ſee his zeal for the Lord*

Lord of Hoſts, ſo long as this work of the Lord was concurrent with, and conducing to his own eſtabliſhment; but when theſe two may be divided and diſtinct, his zeal abates, and himſelf can follow the way of *Jeroboam*, to own the Altars at *Dan* and *Bethel*, 2 Kings 10. As under the Law we finde expreſſely the ſin of Altar-building, to be the ſad fruit of ſelf-advancement: ſo we ſhall ſee clearly, that from the ſame root doth it alſo ſpring, under the Goſpel, all declinings of the Altar of Gods true worſhip, wayes and doctrine, and following after innovated principles and practices, thoſe falſe and oppoſite Altars, ſpring and get ſtrength, if we do but ſeriouſly obſerve the Apoſtles characterizing deceivers, ſeducing Apoſtate Altar-builders, *to be lovers of themſelves, proud, high-minded, lovers of pleaſures more then lovers of God*, 2 Tim. 3. 2, 4. ſuch as count gaine godlineſſe *, 1 *Tim.* 6. 5. ſuch as have hearts exerciſed (with might and ſtrength, as the

* *Quæſtum eſſe pietatem, ſic reſolve, pietatem eſſe quæſtum, vel autem quæſtuoſam, quia ſcilicet totum Chriſtianiſmum lucro metiuntur. Calvin loc.*

Orig) * with covetousnesse, 2 Pet. 2. 14. Such as followed the way of *Balaam*, and were cast away with the wages of unrighteousnesse, (as I noted before) nay the Apostle *Peter* affirmes, that through covetousnesse they *make merchandise of soules*, 2 Pet. 2. 3. And St. *John* in his third Epistle, the ninth vetse, notes *Diotrephes* corrupt practice to spring from this, that he loved to have the preheminence. Should we unto these clear Scripture-instanced-evidences, adde examples out of other histories: who shall observe the devil exciting his Turkish instruments, to crown apostacy from the Christian Religion, with the honourable order of (*a*) Mamelukes, and (*b*) Janizaries, but must needs conclude advancement to be the proper way to seduce a selfish spirit from the Altar of God? This was the very ground which led (*c*) *Mahomet* the first Turkish Emperour, to faile the hopes of his mother, and the expectation of the Christians, by embracing the Mahume-

* καρδίαν γεγυμνασμένην πλεονεξίας ἔχοντες, ideo apostolus utitur plurali numero, ut ostendat, secundum stores illos non uno avaritiæ morbo laborare nec unam duntaxat artem callere, divitias perfas nefásque congerendi, ac simpliciores pecunia emungendi. *Ger. in loc.*

(*a*) Gen. hist. of Turks.

(*b*) *p.* 107. *a.* 91. the latter set up by *Caza Russhemes*, a Doctor of the Mahometane Law. (*c*) In *p.* 337.

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tane Altar, and abhorring the Christian to which he was educated: self-establishment in his treacherously obtained Empire, was the principle that engaged (*d*) *Michael Paleologus*, to subject the Christian liberty the Greek Churches did enjoy, unto the Antichristian yoke, and Papal tyrannie of *Gregory* the tenth; nay, we might shew that the desire of being reputed a Saint and shame of being shut out of communion with the Church, was that which gave occasion to (*e*) *Marcion*, his heretical Altar-building: and the proud affectation of the dignity of a Bishop, was the cause of (*f*) *Novatus* sinful separation, and uncharitable opinions. What shall we say of *Gerinthus*, *Samosatenus*, *Manes*, *Arrianus*, *&c.* those great Altar-builders against Gods Altar, is it not easie to see self-advancement to have been the bellowes which did blow their false fire: nay, will not our own experience, of the pride and self-advancement of the Authors or Indulgers of innovated principles and practices, clearly evidence this sin of Altar-building to be the fruit of that bitter root, and so to be exceeding vile, and

(*d*) In p. 144.

(*e*) *Euseb. Eccl. hist.* l. 4. c. 11.

(*f*) *Lib.* 6. c. 42.

to

to be ſeen unto by the ſincere worſhippers?

And thus I have done with the firſt thing propounded, to ſet forth the vile and ſinful nature of Altar-building, againſt Gods Altar; which, unleſſe men may gather grapes of thiſtles, and figs of thornes, ſincere worſhippers of God cannot but conceive to be exceeding vile and ſinful, whileſt the odious and bitter fruit of ſhameful novelty, ſwelling pride, and ſelf-advantage and advancement. I now come to ſhew the ſecond thing that ſets forth its vileneſſe, *(viz) its ſinful actings:* which if we finde but anſwerable to the grounds of it, muſt needs render it a ſin ſo grievous, that it is not only to be diſreliſhed, but with all power in their proper places to be reſiſted, by the ſincere worſhippers of Gods Altar: and in this ſinful work, the Actors contract upon themſelves the guilt of a threefold ſinful acting: 1. *A receding from God.* 2. *A rendering our wills the rule of divine Worſhip.* And 3. *A rebellion againſt the divine Majeſty.*

The firſt ſinful act in building Altars, beſides the Altar of God, is *the receding*

ding from the Lord, a forſaking of, and departing from God, not only when we directly and immediately change the object, and ſet up Altars unto ſtrange gods, ſtocks and ſtones, idols which are no gods, which muſt needs be granted to be the effect of *a receding from the Lord*: but when we withdraw from the matter or forme of Gods worſhip, even then we may be, and are juſtly ſaid to depart from the true God. To withdraw from God, and to embrace another object in his ſtead, are two diſtinct acts, and ever diſtinctly noted in Scripture with diſtinguiſhing termes; the one may be done, where the other doth not immediately, if ever, follow; for as a wicked wife may depart from her husband moſt treacherouſly, and yet marrieth not another: ſo may men depart from God, and not ſo much as embrace any divine object in the room thereof, but with Atheiſts, *ſay in their heart, There is no God*: nay, uſually the departing from God in declining his Altar and Worſhip goes before, and is the way to embracing ſtrange gods, or entertaining meer Atheiſme; this the Church, wanting the Ordinances, Altar, and

and true Worſhip of the true God was afraid of, (as ſome note in the dayes of *Jeroboam*) when ſhe prayes and cries earneſtly, to know *where the flocks of God did reſt*, urging the argument of her preſent danger; *Why ſhould I turne aſide by the flocks of thy companions?* (ſo calling themſelves,) *Cant.* 1. 7. and the ten tribes of *Iſrael* by *Jeroboam*, were drawn from God before they worſhipped at *Dan* and *Bethel*; for the receding from the cauſe muſt needs be a refuſing of the effect; denial of Gods Altar is the declining of communion with God. As in the Ordinances and at the Altar of God, men are ſaid to *draw nigh unto the Lord, to appear before him, or in his preſence*, as, Levit. 10. 2. Pſal. 42. 4. ſo the turning from them may be juſtly termed *a turning from the Lord*, being a declining of that matter, and that forme God hath preſcribed himſelf to be enjoyed, and to enjoy his people by, ſo that if any do objectively depart from God, by changing their God, they will be juſtly charged, not only *to depart from God*, but alſo *to worſhip idols, to change their god, to forſake the fountain of living waters, and*

Brightman, Cotton on the place.

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to dig ciſternes that hold no water, Jer. 2. 11, 13. and therein they commit two evils; but if they refuſe to worſhip God at his Altar, and according to his own declared Will, if they corrupt the matter of Gods Worſhip, or adulterate the forme of their adminiſtration, they are juſtly charged with a going from God: thus God by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, in *chap.* 65. 11. chargeth the people with a forſaking him, in that they *forget his holy mountaine*: and by the Prophet *Malachi*, *chap.* 2. 8. he upbraids the Prieſts with *a departing out of his way*, for corrupting of his Covenant and doctrine: and the Authour to the *Hebrewes* exhorts to a conſtant adherence to the adminiſtrations of Gods Worſhip, according to the Goſpel-forme, denominating the declining of it, *a departing from the living God*, Heb. 3 13. In Altar-building, as in other actions, there is conſiderable the terme from which before, the terme to which they move, and ſo the firſt act in this grievous ſin is in Scripture-phraſe in the Old and New Teſtament, denominated a forſaking of God in the complaints of the ſincere, as, 1 *Kings* 19. 10. the charges

charges of the sinne by the Peophets, 2 *Chron.* 12. 5, 24. 20. 24. *Isa.* 1. 4. and by the confessions of the penitent, *Judg.* 10. 10. *Ezr.* 9 10. when *Rehoboam* ready to joyn battel with *Ieroboam* declares the grounds of his confidence, amongst others this is not the least, that they by changing the matter of divine Worship, or the Priestly forme of administration, ordained of God, and so proceeding to the sin of Altar-building, they had not forsaken their God, as had the ten tribes: and in the very story to which our text refers, we finde the suspected Altar-building branded with this epithete, *a turning aside from following the Lord*, Josh. 22. 16, 18, 23. And under the Gospel such as turn from the truth to innovations, are said *to depart from the faith*, 1 Tim. 4. 1. *to forsake the way of truth*, 2 Pet. 2. 15. *and to depart from the living God*, Heb. 3. 12. So that Gods charge upon the Altar-building Jewes may be charged on all Altar-builders, *As a wife that treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt with me*, Jer. 12. 20. Is it not a vile thing, sinful and sadly provoking amongst men, for souldiers to forsake

2 Chron. 13. 10, 11.

their

their colours, children their Parents, and wives their husbands? how much more vile must that sin be, whereby creatures forsake their Creator, the redeemed depart from their Redeemer? they that are naturally bent to pursue solid satisfying comforts, forsake the fountain of living waters: nay; and how foolish must it be to provoke, *by turning from that presence from which we cannot flee?* mountaines and hills, hell and darknesse cannot hide; and that power which we can neither resist nor escape, but it will follow the sinful Altar-builders that forsake him, to cover them with shame, and to write them in the dust, *Jer.* 17. 13. Thus then by this first act, we cannot but see this sin to be so very sinful, and to be speedily seen to by sincere Worshippers of God.

The second act in Altar-building is, *the rendring our own wills the rule of the Lords Worship*, and against the expresse prohibition a doing that which is right in our own eyes, and so sinfully subjecting a divine object to the obedience of humane pleasure: and a soveraign God and Creator to such matter and measure of service, as suits to the fancie of a fraile, ignorant, sin-

ſinful creature to yield: which is in its nature ſo vile and ſhameful, that it may make every ſoul that ſeriouſly conſider-eth it, to bluſh and tremble to think, that fraile man ſhould once preſume to preſcribe obedience to be yielded to a great God: whilſt nature it ſelf teacheth, that
Deut. 12. 8. all ſuperiour objects of ſervice and obedience muſt dictate the Laws, and preſcribe the forme in which they will acquieſce and receive content. Is it not below ſupream authority, to ſee the Lawes deſpiſed, and obedience yielded according to the ſubjects fancie? What father could brook his ſons obedience according to his own will? what General would reliſh his armies ſubjection after its own conceit? *Obedience after the will of the ſubject is the ſubverſion of authority and ſupremacy, and exemption from the charge of rebellion in every action, though never ſo vile.* How much leſſe ſhal the God of Heaven endure to be diſrobed of his Soveraigoty, in being denied the Prerogative of preſcribing his worſhip, ſervice and obedience? This God would not admit in the evil Angels, but for their attempt thereof, caſt them into vtter darkneſſe. And if God would not

leave

leave man to the libertie of his will, in the obedience he should yield his Creatour in the estate of his innocencie, when he was in a capacity of yielding perfect and pleasing obedience, but would proclaim his Soveraignty by the prescription of some special act of obedience, as the approvement of his due subjection, how much lesse shall the sons of men think to satisfie his Will, by following their own inventions since their fall, with the attempt of which, to everlasting reproach humane nature stands stigmatized, as the thing which cast the same out of happinesse? We shall finde God so exact in his service, that he constituting *Israel* his chosen people to beare his Name amongst other Nations, leaves them not to worship him according to their own will, but gives them lawes, and statutes, and ordinances, and by his terrible appearance on Mount *Sinai*: his severe, Mosem in cultu Dei erigendo Deus astrinxit ad Cœlesteexemplar, ut nihil formaret in terra, nisi quod congruum esset archetypo ex cœlis exhibito. Non habiturus id gratum aut ratum quicquid ex suo cerebro præter illud effinxisset. *Pa. in loc.* Nunc de forma agitur, etiam rerum externarum ad cultum Dei pertinentium, quam noluit Deus humano arbitrio relinquere, sed eam ipse præscribere & determinare. *Revel. in Ex.*

judgements, and ſerious charge of *Moſes*, engageth them to the obſervance thereof: nay, ſo exact is he in his worſhip and ſervice, the very inſtruments and forme of the adminiſtration, that he gives *Moſes* a patterne of the Tabernacle, and all other things, requiring and ſtraitly charging every thing to be done according to the paterne ſhewed in the Mount, *Exod.* 25. 9, 40. *Heb.* 8. 5. the due obſervance of which, approved *Moſes* faithful in Gods houſe. It is the obſervation of Dr. *Willet*, that *the forme of the Tabernacle is not left to the will of man, no not to the judgement of Moſes; to teach us that God will not be worſhipped with will-worſhip, according to the devices and inventions of men, but as himſelf hath appointed*: the which we may alſo infer from *Davids* care, concerning the edification of the Temple, when he not only leaves his charge on *Solomon* his ſon to do this work, (intended by himſelf) but alſo to do it *according to the patern he delivered him*: enforcing his charge with this very reaſon, *All this God made me to underſtand*

Willet. Hexapla in Exod. p. 595.

By ſome Prophet of God, who revealed all that ſhould be done to the Temple, as he had anciently told *Moſes* the form of the Tabernacle. *Diod. in loc.*

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in writing, by his hand upon me, even all the work of this patterne, 1 Chon. 28. 11, 12, 19. therefore called *the paterne of all that was with him by the Spirit*; by all which we may ſee the Soveraign God challenging, (which is his due) the prerogative of preſcribing his own worſhip, and the very inſtruments and forme thereof, yet ſuch is the vileneſſe of corrupt nature, that though God complain of the ſin in the Jewes, that *their feare of him was taught by the precepts of men*, Iſ. 29. 13. and Chriſt chargeth and aggravateth their ſin by the ſame, aſſerting, *that in vain men worſhip him, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*, Mat. 15. 9. that the ſons of men are apt to meaſure the worſhip they will yield to God by the rule of their own will: in which regard ſinful Altar-builders are (in Scripture-phraſe) commonly ſaid to forſake *the Covenant*, Deut. 29. 25. 1 Kings 19. 10. and *Commandments of God*, Ezra 9. 10. and *Law of the Lord*, Jer. 9. 13. *the right way*, 2 Pet. 2. 15. and to follow *their own inventions*, after which, to the provocation of divine juſtice, they *go a whoring*, as,

Psal. 106. 29, 39. of which God will take vengeance, *Psal.* 99. 8. in which regard the Apostle *Paul* calls seducements from the truth of the doctrine of Jesus Christ, though upon never so eminent pretences of Piety, ἐθελοθρησκίας, or will-worship, *Col.* 2. 23. the which he condemns, and cautions Christians to take heed of, as having only a shew of wisdom, but being indeed sinful fooleries; so that thus we see men, whose spirits are subjects to motion *à quo ad quem*, being in the first act loosed from the Altar and Worship of God in the sin of Altar-building, not capable of living without some religion or other; In the second act, consult their own inventions, and erect an Altar and Worship unto God, according to their own will; although to the shame of men it be registred in sacred record, *that God made man upright, and he sought out many inventions*, Eccl. 7. 29. Thus then I have done with the second act of Altar-builders, the rendering their own

Opera hominum nominat omnes cultus quos sine mandato Dei instituunt, & in quibus cultum aliquem religionis collocant, bonâ aliquâ (ut loqui solent) intentione. *Mal. in loc.*

Erat rectus conditus homo ab initio, sed curiositate sua, Dei verbo non contentus, sibi malum ascivit & toti posteritati. *Mer. in loc.*

wills

wills the rule of their obedience, and now paſſe to the third act.

The third act is, *rebellion againſt God. and againſt the authority to which God hath committed the charge of his Altar*; and to ſtand on the proving this at large, were but time and paines ſpent in vain, whileſt I ſhould but do what is done already: for having cleared the two former acts of this ſin, (*viz.*) that it is a receſſion from God, and rendering our own wills the rule of divine worſhip; I have cleared the premiſes, which muſt needs enforce this Concluſion, for theſe two are the integral and eſſential parts of rebellion, according to which it is denominated: for when men go from the Covenant and Commandments of God, what do they otherwiſe then ſtand oppoſite to him, with a ſtubborne will, uttering the rebellious language of the rebellious Gentiles, in *Pſal.* 2. 3. *Let us break his bands in ſunder, and caſt his cords from off us?* and thoſe rebellious Citizens ſpoken of in the Parable, in *Luke* 19. 14. whoſe meſſage was, *We will not have this man to reign over us*: and hence the words, which in

the * Greek and Hebrew are commonly used to signifie rebellion, are also used to signifie *defection*, *delinquencie*, and *Apostasy* or *turning aside* from God; so that these several words in our language are and may be synonoma, or of the same signification, to expresse the same sin: and hence also all rebellion is said to be a defection from the superiours to whom they owe subjection: yet might I give instances in Scripture, where this sin is called a rebellion, and stubborne opposition of God, as *Corah* and his company, *Numb.* 16, 17. *ch.* and *Jeroboam*, nay all the Altar-building Princes of *Judah* and *Israel* are said *to rebel against the Lord*, when they follow after idols in the acting of this sin; but why go I to look instances, at this distance, when the very text denominates it thus: saying, *Rebel not against the Lord, and rebel not against us*? only this you may take notice of in the text, that the terme Rebel not against the Lord, comes from the same root in the

*As מרד מרח ἀποστασία ἀφηνιασμὸς Vid. *Leigh* Crit. sacr. *Bux.* Lex. Scapulæ. The Septuagint do so use it. See also Mr. *Medes* Apostasie of latter times. *p.* 5. where he interprets Apostasie to be a rebellion against God.

מרד of אל תמרדכ

the Hebrew, from which is derived *Nimrod*, the name of that great Hunter before (or as *Auguſtine*, *Hierom*, and others of the Ancients againſt) the Lord, if he were ſo called from his *Apoſtaſie, defection and rebellion*: his rebellion was ſo great, as that his name is proverbially given to every rebellious tyrant, by way of alluſion to him: he is noted to be the head of that rebellious work againſt God, which we read of in *Gen.* 11. and that from a very probable conjecture, ſeeing in Scripture that place of *Babel* is called his Kingdome, *Gen.* 10. 10. his rebellious act was this very ſin of Altar-building, if (as *Hugo* notes) he was the firſt bringer in of idolatry, teaching men to worſhip the fire, or as *Joſephus*, that he excited men to contemn God and follow fortune in their own united power, and ſo was the firſt founder of idolatry, of whoſe minde is Dr. *Willet*, conceiving him to be the ſame whom forreigne ſtory calls *Belus*, and makes the firſt founder of their Babylonian Monarchy, of whom the Gentiles in the Eaſterne parts of the world, called their idols, *Belial*, *Beelzebub*, *Belphegor*. You ſee

Hugo in Annot. in Gen.

Joſeph. antiq. c. 5. p. 9.

Willets Hexa. in Gen. 10. 9.

then clearly that Altar-builders, by departing from God, and following their own ways, do rebel against the Lord: which must needs render the sin exceeding vile in the eyes of such as are the Lords subjects; for what spot of infamie and reproach can be cast on the sons of men more odious and hateful then *rebellion*? what is so immediately and highly provoking unto Soveraignty as *rebellion*? for most clement Princes must needs with a severe hand chastise rebellion: such is the vile nature of rebellion, that found in children against the Parents, by Gods Ordinance among the Jewes, the subject of it must be stoned with stones, *Deut.* 21. 18, 19, 20. And when *Moses* would exalt Gods mercies to *Israel*, he aggravates their unworthinesse by charging them to have been *a stiffe-necked and rebellious people*, *Deut.* 9. 6, 23, 24. And *Samuel* charging *Saul* with this guilt, asserts rebellion to be as the sin of witchcraft for its vile nature. And when *Jerusalems* enemies would make her vile, they will denominate her *a rebellious City*, Ezra 4. 12, 15. And did ever any yet *rebel against the Lord and prosper*? let the severe

vere judgements of God upon *Judah* and *Israel* for their rebellions witnesse. Whil'st then this sin of Altar-building appears so vile, not only in the ground, but also the acts thereof, let all sincere worshippers at Gods Altar consider, whether their loyalty to their great Creator, and gracious Redeemer do not engage them in their places, to see to so great and crying a sin.

The third thing that may evidence building Altars, beside the Altar of God, to be a sin exceeding sinful, is *the sad effects thereof*, which we cannot but expect to be exceeding sad and bitter, whilest the root and branches thereof are so exceeding vile; for the fruit must needs be suitable to the tree that beares it: and those are these foure.

1. *A rending from the body of the Church*, a withdrawing from the communion God himself hath set us in; a making a schisme and rent in the Church of God: as *Diodate* notes, a severing our selves from the communion of the Church: in which alone is the true service of God, and the participation of his grace and Covenant, that sad effect of sins Soveraignty among the *Co-*

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rinthians, 1 *Cor.* 3. 4. which is so evil, that the Propagators thereof are to be declined, *Rom.* 16. 17. which violates unity, and deprives the Church of that blessed fruit of the Spirit: this is that which as nature condemnes in the body, so the Gospel in the Church, 1 *Cor.* 12. 25. which when making factions and parties in the Church, as sedition in a Commonweale, is dangerous, and many times destructive, being attended and seconded with envies, strifes, hatred and the like; yet this evil fruit springs from Altar-building as its sad effect, as is evident in the story under consideration, wherein it is clear, that the two Tribes suspected the act in hand to be to this end, to withdraw from any longer communion with their brethten, and to worship God distinct and by themselves: which they desire to prevent by rather giving them inheritances on the same side of the river with them, then the division of portions should divide their piety and joynt attendance on Gods Altar: So *Corah* and his company did rend themselves from the body of the Church, and make a fearful division in refusing to keep communion with the people of God, ac-

See more of this schisme, Mr. *Hollinsworths* Rejoynder to Mr. *Eaton*, and Mr *Tailors* Reply.

cor-

cording to his appointed adminiſtration, in *Numb.* 16. when they were about to erect their Altar againſt Gods: what a ſad rent from the Church did *Ieroboams* Altar-building make? not to this day ſemented, though ſought after by ſuch as earneſtly ſupplicate the accompliſhment of the gracious Promiſe of God, *that the ſtick of Ephraim, and the ſtick of Judah ſhall become one in his hand,* in *Ezek.* 37. from 16, to 21. In which is to be noted that the accompliſhment thereof, is promiſed to be accompanied with the aboliſhment of their Altar-building ſin, and unity in Gods wayes and worſhip, *v.* 22, unto the end of the chapter: which grievous rent from the communion of the Church, a burden not to be borne by the ſincere worſhippers at Gods Altar, provokes (as I before noted out of Mr. *Cotton*,*) that the pathetical prayer to be directed to the true Church and Altar of Chriſt, in *Cant.* 1. 7. that they might be delivered from the danger thereof: nay, it perſwaded not only the Prieſts and Levites to prefer the Altar and Church of God above their ſuburbs and poſſeſſions, but alſo *all ſuch as ſet their heart to ſeek the Lord,*

* His Expoſition on *Canticles.*

Lord, to run the hazard of going to *Jerusalem* to sacrifice unto the Lord with their brethren, 2 *Chron.* 11. 13, 14, 16. This sad effect doth the Spirit witnesse to follow this sin, nay, flow from it under the Gospel; The Apostle *Paul*, *Acts* 20. 30. foreseeing the appearance of seducers, Apostate-Altar-builders, that would innovate doctrines and formes of worship, contrary to Christs institution, chargeth the Elders of the Ephesian Church to see to this sin, at least that their members be not seduced; urging this sad effect as a swaying reason, *They shall draw aside many disciples after them: from the communion of the Church*, * saith one, or make sects, saith another; and the Apostle *Peter*, in the second Epistle, the second chapter, the third verse prophesies, false teachers should be in the Christian Churches, which building their owne Altars of damnable doctrines, many should follow their pernicious wayes, speaking evil of the way of truth: for the confusion of Religion must needs be

* [Ut abducant] ab Ecclesiastica unitate: [post se] ad inhærendum eorum erroribus. *Dyonys. Carthus. in loc.*

Abstrahere autem significat inani gloria tumidos compellere sectatores in sua nomina jurare. *Arct. in loc.* as did *Novatus vid. Euseb. l. 6. c. 4.*

Religionum Confusio dissipat Ecclesiæ consensionem. *Mas. in Text.*

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deſtructive to the concord of the Churches, which God witneſſed by conſtituting one only Altar for all his peoples attendance, with one only forme of adminiſtration, and this cannot but be ſeen in the Apoſtles dayes, by ſuch as ſhall ſeriouſly obſerve the Apoſtolical redargution of ſchiſmes and ſeducers, characterizing falſe apoſtles, charging the Churches to obſerve and decline them, as thoſe that make diviſions and trouble them: frequent commendations of the union and communion of the Church and diſciples, and fervent perſwaſion to, and prayers for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace: which all ſuggeſt to us, and clearly imply, that this ſin of Altar-building by will-worſhippers, was in act to the dividing of the members from the body in their very dayes, and who is there, that looking into Eccleſiaſtical ſtory, ſees not the ſad rentings from, and confuſions in the Church, effected by the Altar-building (of doctrines) diſſonant to truth, and the Altar of Chriſt, propagated by the many hereticks of the primitive times, as *Novatus*, whom *Dionyſius* in his Epiſtle to him chargeth with a renting and dividing *Dionyſ.* Biſhop of *Alexandria*, his Epiſtle to *Novatus* recited by *Euſebius. Pamphil. l. 6. c.* 45. *or tranſlat.* 44.

ding from the Church, as a ſin moſt grievous, counting *the ſuffering for the unity of the Church a more glorious martyrdome, then the ſufferings for not ſacrificing to devils?* for this is ſuffered for one ſoul, that for the univerſal Church. So alſo the Donatiſts, Manichees, *Paulus Samoſatenus*, of whom the Synod of *Antioch* ſadly complaine, *that the Church was ſo rent, that faith and religion was run, into great ſpite, hatred, and ſlander, by reaſon of his ſwelling pride*, as alſo by the Arrians, which filled the whole Chriſtian world with confuſion and diviſion; ſome taking this ſide, and ſome that; ſome communicating here, and ſome there, even to moſt bloody perſecution of the true ſincere Miniſters and people of God, the which ſchiſme, how ſadly complained of by *Athanaſius* the good Biſhop of *Alexandria*, how earneſtly endeavoured to be cemented by *Conſtantine* the good Emperour, and how ſtrongly it reigned to the checking of the Churches comforts, and clouding of the glory of the the Goſpel: *Euſebius* at large declareth, in his firſt and ſecond books of Eccleſiaſtical hiſtory; but may not the ſeparations from the commnnion of the Church,

See their Epiſtle in *Euſeb. l. 7. c. 30.*

Church, and ſad ſchiſmes amongſt our ſelves, produced by ſuch as are of late riſen up to build Altars of innovated doctrines, contrary to the doctrine of Chriſt, call us back from wandring ſo far to ſeek confirmation of this ſad effect of ſo grievous a ſinne, and provoke us with ſhame and ſorrow, to own the evident effect upon our own ſad experience, and ſet to our ſeales, that of a truth Altar-building againſt Gods Altar is an odious, becauſe a Church-renting ſin? for to how many may we ſay, as *Conſtantine* the Emperour to *Aretius* the Novatian Biſhop, *Why ſever ye your ſelves from the communion of the faithfull?* whoſe anſwer may occaſion our reply as his: *Provide you a ladder to climbe into Heaven alone.* *Socrates Scholaſticus, Eccl. hiſt. l. 1. c. 10*

The ſecond effect which muſt needs alſo ſhew the building Altars, beſide the Altar of God, to be exceeding ſinful, is (to ſpeak with due reverence) *a running God upon ſtraits, concerning the diſpenſations of his Providences, and the adminiſtration of his judgements or mercies*; not that God is in his nature capable of ſuch want of wiſdome, who is the moſt wiſe, and readily diſpoſeth all things

things according to the counsel of his own will: or weakness of power to effect and bring about his purpose, whose power is like himself, and not to be resisted as that is, should make him to doubt or dispute what to do, whether to strike or spare the sinner. But to speak to our capacity, such may be sometimes the effects of divine Providence, that to us God may seem to be in a strait, and, as it were, in doubt with himself; his justice provoked by the sin, putting forward to punish the sinner; and his mercies desiring repentance and deliverance, pleading for suspence or abatements of the afflictions striving together, make God (as it were) cry out, *What shall I do unto thee? how shall I give thee, ap Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim?* Wherein though this Altar-building *Israel* had deserved to be made as *Admah* and *Zeboim* for their sinne, yet God doth seemingly dis-

Luctatur in Deo hinc justitia & ira adversus peccata, quæ atrociter peccantes atrociter puniri & perdi postulat: illinc immensa misericordia & bonitas, quæ non vult mortem peccatoris, sed ut convertatur & vivat. *Par. in Hos.* 11.8

Hac particula ostendit Deus quid meriti sunt Israelitæ, & jam se propensum esse ad sumendam pœnam quâ digni sunt: non tamen id sine pœnitentia vel saltem dubitatione. *Calv. in loc.*

pute

pute with himself, how should he do it to them: in *Hos.* 11. 8. such another strait God seems to be in, when he stands over *Jerusalem* with his *how long?* and *when shall it once be?* as in *Jer.* 13. 27. where he cries out of this sin of Altar-building, *I have seen thine adulteries and neighings, the lewdnesse of thy whoredomes, and thy abominations on the hills in the fields; Woe unto thee, O Jerusalem!* as if he should have said, I have seen all Altars, and am ready to strike and punish thee severely for them: but yet he checks himself, and bids a stay to his justice, with a wilt thou not be made clean? when shall it once be? I would faine have my hand stayed, at last, even at last before the stroak that is up, fall: and as mercie and justice, those different properties in God, are (to speak with reverence of a God not in the least subject to passions) set, as it were, opposite by this sin, so also we shall see a seeming strife betweene Gods purity, that cannot endure iniquity, and divine glory which he will not in the least give to another, and promise performance, faithfulnesse: for the sin being acted, God forsaken, his Law declined, and mans will and inven-

tions advanced, then Gods purity provokes divine justice to strike with such language as this; 'I am holy, I cannot 'endure sin, yet it is acted against me; If 'sentence be not speedily executed, the 'heart of men will be fully set in them 'to do wickedly; patience will but pro-'voke their prophaneneſſe, they being 'so corrupt as to abuse it, *Eccles.* 8.11. 'will be as it were driven to sin by it, nay, 'they will make divine silence an argu-'ment of sins allowance; and when they 'sleight my service, and set up their owne 'inventions, and yet go on and prosper, 'and I hold my tongue, they will say, I 'am altogether such an one as them-'selves; arise, justice, let me not be re-'puted the Author or indulger of such 'disobedience, set their sins in order be-'fore their eyes, *Psal.* 50. 21. Nay, though 'they being deareſt *Davids*, doth not 'their sin give occasion to mine enemies 'to blaspheme? should I suffer *Jedidiah*, 'my beloved one, to increase his worship 'at Idol-Altars, and corrupt, nay, de-'cline mine and his posterity to possesse 'his Kingdome? will not the Heathen 'say, I am not pure and holy, for I in-'dulge their sin? Do not the lewd lives

of

'of Chriſtians cauſe the Heathen to re-
'proach the Goſpel of my Sonne, and to
'ſay my doctrine dictates ſuch things as
'nature will bluſh to ſee? as if nature
'(which I made) were more pure then
'my ſelfe; ſhall I be ſilent and not cor-
'rect the impieties of my people, which
'make Heathen *Romes* Senators when
'they ſee my holy Word, to queſtion
'whether it be my Law: Shall my divine
'nature be blaſphemouſly denied by an
'Apoſtate *Julian*, or *Arius*, and I not be
'avenged? Shall the perfidious and per-
'jurious deeds of my Chriſtian people
'deny me to be a God, and provoke
'this Turkiſh appeale to my purity, pro-
'ducing the league ſworne in my name,
'and broken by them?

Behold, thou crucified Chriſt, this is the league thy Chriſtians in thy Name made with me, which they have without cauſe violated; now if thou be a God, as they ſay thou art, and as we dreame, revenge the wrong now done unto thy Name, and me; and ſhew thy power on thy perjurious people, who in their deeds deny thee their God.

As did *Amurath* ſixth King of the Turks againſt Uladiſlaus king of *Hungary* & *Polonia*, when he took abſolution from his oath from Cardinal *Julian*, and fought againſt the Turks, contrary to the league ſworne.

See *Turk. Hiſt.* p. 297.

And shall I not arise to chastise them? will not the honour of my holy Name and nature by severe judgements for their unholinesse on those my people, who will not shew it by their conformity, obeying my Lawes, and fearing to offend my pleasure: be vindicated from the blasphemous thoughts of mine enemies?

Unto which Gods power, glory, and faithfulnesse standing up, do (as it were) answer and plead, True O Lord, most holy, thy pure nature stands justly offended, thy people are by their Altar-building made naked in thy sight; they have moved thee to jealousie with that which is not God, or of God: it may be just that the fire kindled against them in thy wrath, should burne unto Hell, and that therein for their sin, thou mayest scatter them into corners, and make their remembrance for to cease, and thereby vindicate the glory of thy purity, and shew thy selfe a sin-hating, by being a sin-revenging God; but what shall become of thy faithfulnesse? the glory thereof will be lost in the midst of the Heathen. O remember thy promise, Lord, thy promise made to *Abraham*, to *Isaac*, and

Deu. 32. 21 22.

Exod. 32. 12, 13.

and *Jacob*; and let not the Heathen ſay thou haſt ſpoken what thou wilt not performe, thou art not as man that thou ſhouldſt lie, nor the ſonne of man that thou ſhouldeſt repent: O let the mouth of *Balaam* witneſſe to a curſing *Balak*, that thou haſt ſaid it, and thou wilt do it; thou haſt ſpoken it, and thou wilt make it good, *Numb.* 23. 19. How ſhall the Heathen alſo blaſpheme thy power, 'and ſay, becauſe thou waſt not able to 'bring to paſſe thy begun mercy, and 'give them the promiſed land: thou haſt 'ſlaine them in the wilderneſſe? *Numb.* '14. 16. For, Lord, the Nations conſider 'not the cauſe, nor acckowledge thy 'juſtice, but reproach thy power, and 'promiſe, and ſay, For miſchief thou haſt 'begun to ſhew them mercy: Nay, they 'will not only reproach thy power and 'promiſe, but rob thee of thine honour, 'and the glory of thy juſtly inflicted fu-'ry; the rod will rebel againſt the hand 'that uſeth it; if now, and ſo ſeverely 'thou ſtrike with it: conſider, Lord, make 'not a full end of this rebellious Altar-'building generation; for the enemies 'will behave himſelfe proudly, and ſay, My hand, and not the Lord, hath done Deu. 32. 27.

all this: so that sinne doth not onely make Gods Word to fight against it self in promises and threats, but also the very properties of the Lord: how sad must it be unto an ingenuous child to see fury and mercy, power and pitie, justice and compassion at the same time to shine in the bosome of a tender father? how vile then must this sinne be which runs God on such straits, when as much as in us lies, we labour to confound the very God of Wisdome, and set unity at enmity, making the Divine nature, as it were, to warre against it self? And hence it is that the properties of God are many times pleading expostulations with God, *modo admonentis de benignitate*, by way of humble minding God of his owne nature in the prayers of his owne people, fearing or feeling the fierceneſſe of his fury.

The third effect is, *a rendering the worship of God vile in the eyes of the heathen which know him not:* by this sinne the enemies of the Lord have occasion to blaspheme the Name and ways of God, to reproach the Gospel and Doctrine of Jesus Christ: for in Altar-building men run from God, and actually speak the language of the Apostate covenant-

corrupt-

corrupting Jewes, It is in vaine to ſerve God, and what profit have we that we have kept all his Ordinances? *Mal.* 3.14. and attribute the peace and plenty Gods patience indulgeth, unto the Queene of Heaven, and their ſhameful impieties, *Jer.* 44.17, 18. and therefore God complains, that when his people built Altars unto *Baal*, they did not know that God gave her corne, and wine, and oyle, and multiplied their ſilver and gold, *Hoſea* 2. 8. And God aggravates this ſinne ever with the mention of his mercies, whereby he declares how little cauſe they had ſo really to vilifie his wayes and worſhip, by departing from them: their rebellion againſt his will and words, muſt needs beſpeak his yoake to be heavie and ſervile bondage, which is indeed perfect freedome, and his tender reigne over his people, to be fierce and cruel. The Schiſmes and ſad Diviſions produced by this ſinne, give occaſion to ſuch as know not the doctrine of unity, to charge the wayes and worſhip of God with the natural production thereof, never conſidering how they are the fruits of ſinne, not of Gods ſacred Altar. How hath Satan and his wicked inſtruments taken occaſi-

cation to reproach, vilifie, and blaſpheme the wayes and worſhip of God from the lewdneſſe of ſome that profeſſe it in all ages; do not the Papiſts generally calumniate the Reformation of the Church with the charge of *diviſion and novelty*, and the like? becauſe ſome profeſſing to it have divided from the Church, and propagated their Altar-building-principles; ſo that every obſervant eye cannot but ſee that Altar-building, beſides the Altar of God, makes Gods Altar, Word, and Worſhip, as *Simeon* and *Levi*, their curſed act on the circumciſed Schechemites, made good *Jacobs* ſavour to ſtink among the Canaanites and Perizzites: in which regard it lies on the ſincere worſhippers of God with conſtancie to adhere to Gods Altar, and with courage to ſuppreſſe others in their places, as becomes the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt.

The fourth and laſt effect of this ſinne of Altar-building, which may render it exceeding vile, is, *a reviving of the Lords fury*: for theſe are *the Altars of Bethel which God will viſit*, Amos 3. 14. This is the ſinne that is *written before the Lord as with a pen of iron, and point of a diamond*, Jer. 17. 1, 2. This is the ſetting of

poſt

post by his post, and threshold by the Lords threshold, to the defiling of Gods holy Name till the subjects be consumed in his anger, Ezek. 43.8. This is the setting up *the Altar of jealousie* to the provoking of God *to depart from his Sanctuarie*, Ezek. 8. 6. This is the following new gods to the kindling of *a fire in his wrath, which shall burne to hell*, Deut. 32, 21, 22. In a word, this is the golden Calfe, which turnes patience (to speak with reverence) into such rage, that a *Moses* prayer can hardly binde from destroying, *Exod.* 32. 8, 9, 10. and the rebellion so highly provoking that a God most gracious, in all affliction afflicted, in pitie and love saving and redeeming, being by it vexed in spirit, becomes an enemie, *Isa.* 63.9. How did *Corah* and his company by their but formal Altar-building, schismatical withdrawing from the administrations of divine worship, provoke the Lords wrath to the causing of the earth to open her mouth and swallow them up alive? How did *Solomons* Altars stir up divine displeasure, to the rending away ten Tribes from his Kingdome, not to this day restored? What sad monuments of divine justice and fury hath it made *Jerusalem*

and

and *Samaria*: it were eaſie to evidence the increaſing property of this ſin; but this may ſuffice to ſuch as do but conſider the fierceneſſe of the Lords fury, which will make *the mountaines to melt, and hills to ſhake, and Kings of the earth to tremble*; for who can ſtand before his frown, much more fatal then the frowne of the moſt cruel Turkiſh tyrant threatening preſent death? Can this Lion roare, and the beaſts of the earth not tremble? If while his wrath is kindled but a little, they be happy that truſt in Chriſt; what terrour muſt poſſeſſe them that by their Altars-building are naked before it; ſo that the ſinne muſt needs be vile, to be avoided, and ſeaſonably ſeene to, that is ſo highly diſpleaſing unto God.

Mic. 1. 4.

Amos 1. 2.

Pſal. 2. 12.

Exo. 32. 25

I have now done with the third thing in the diſcovery of the ſinfulneſſe of building Altars beſide the Altar of God, (*viz.*) *the vile effects* which ſpring from it: which taſted by ſerious contemplation, cannot but render it bitter in the mouth, and excite ſincere worſhippers of God againſt it; I ſhall only adde one thing more to the aggravation of its vileneſſe, and that very briefly, and ſo paſſe to the Application of the Point, *viz.* the aggravating properties. The

The firſt aggravating property that may render Altar-building to be exceeding vile, is, *the ſingularity of the ſubjects.* Singularity is not ſavoury in any; it many times ſprings from pride, and beſpeaks an evil diſpoſition: this ſinne is many times acted by Gods people only, who know the true God, and have worſhipped at the true Altar: this ſin God himſelf aggravates with this very property, in *Jer.* 2. 11. expoſtulating with them, *Hath any Nation changed their gods, though they be no gods? and yet my people have changed their glory for that which will not profit:* and, *Iſa.* 65. *v.* 5. the rebellious people which follow their owne thoughts, and burne incenſe upon Altars of Brick, have their ſin aggravated by their ſingularity; they ſay, *Stand by thy ſelfe, come not neare me, I am holier then thou:* as that which makes a ſmoak in Gods noſtrils, and a fire to burne all the day: ſo that this addes much to this vile ſinne; The iſles of *Ghittim*, and coaſt of *Kedar* will not afford a parallel, or ſhew ſuch a thing: for whilſt the Epheſians ſuſpecting any innovation againſt their *Diana*, run together with great zeal crying, *Great is Diana of the Epheſians,* and

and readily contend for their Idol-goddesse and superstitious worship, as resolved not to change, though for a better; and the Athenians, though given to novelty, think *Paul* odious in seeming to set forth new gods: the people of the true God are only seene to change sometimes the object, but many times the Altar the true God hath prescribed to be worshipped at.

The second aggravating propertie of Altar-building is, that it is *committed against standing directions, dictated Lawes and Ordinances*, Gods revealed will and pleasure concerning his Altar and Worship: as it is *Israels* glory, that no Nation is so great a Nation that hath such Statutes and Judgements, as all the Law of the Lord their God; so it is laid on them as the greater duty to take heed to themselves, and to keep their soul diligently, that they forget them not, but teach them to their sons, & sons sons, and observe to do them; it is also their great aggravation, that they forsake the Covenant of their God, go away from his Statutes, forget his Lawes, cast off his Commandments, to create to themselves an Altar and Worship according to their owne

Deut. 7.

Acts 17, 13

owne inventions: and though the Athenian ignorance may extenuate their ſuperſtitious worſhip at the Altar to the unknown God: yet now light is come abroad, and God calls to repentance, they muſt walk as children of the light; for ignorance can now be no plea, where preſcript rule is propoſed: now as rebellion againſt a Kings Proclamation, and diſobedience againſt a fathers declared will, ſo is this Altar-building hainous and abominable, becauſe againſt directions exhibited.

The third aggravating property of this ſinne of Altar-building, is, that *it ſhuts Gods eares againſt prayer.* What is ſpoken of ſinnes in generall in *Iſa.* 59. 2. *Your ſins have hid his face from you, that he will not heare*: is applicable, nay, applied to this ſinne in ſpecial, where God not only declares that when *Iſrael* his Altar-building people, did cry to him in their trouble, he would not hear them, *Ier.* 11. 11. but alſo prohibits the Prophets praying, *Thou ſhalt not pray for this people, neither lift up a cry or prayer for them*: and that is urged with a therefore, (viz.) becauſe, *according to the numbers of the ſtreets of Ieruſalem, they have ſet up Altars*, ver. 12, 13.

Let

Let me alone, *Moses*, was the angry voice of God, produced by the Calf, and Altar at *Horeb*, Exod. 32. 10. How just is it with God to deny the Petitions of them, that deny prescriptions from him in the way of his owne worship? *Prov.* 1. 25, to 33. For as children when stubbornly following their own * wills fall into harme, their cries are not compassionated by the tender parent: so deales God with his stubborne people that make their wills the way or rule of his divine worship.

* Si cursum vitæ nostræ propriis consiliis regere volumus, & religionis fideique negotium secundum rationem nostram instituere, idem nobis accidit quod pueris quos parentes primum docent incedere, &c. *Lav.* in *Prov.* 1. 31.

I have now done with the Doctrinal consideration of the Point, and shall leave it to the judgements of the sincere worshippers at God's Altar, to consider whether a sinne springing from such causes, exercised in such acts, producing such effects, subject to such aggravations, be not exceeding sinful; and if but suspected to be undertaken, sufficient to stir the zeale of the ten tribes, to the resistance thereof, much to be seene to, sorrowed for, and soone suppressed, where it is, really

really, and indeed acted: I ſhall now briefly apply to our more particular inſtruction.

The firſt Uſe of the point may be of enquiry and humiliation, to put us upon the ſearch whether in the midſt of us we may not ſee ſome of our brethren, profeſſing the ſame, and who have worſhipped in the ſame Goſpel-worſhip with our ſelves, to withdraw from the Altar of God, and erect Altars after their owne inventions; which if we finde, our hearts ſhould be heavie in us, and our eyes filled with tears: as humbling our ſelves for ſo grievous a guilt: and upon enquiry, he that is not wilfully blinde, cannot but ſee beyond the river in the Church of *Rome* material, beſides formal Altars built beſides the Altar of God: five Sacraments innovated which God never inſtituted: objects of divine adoration advanced, never by the Lord, or themſelves allowed: Sacrifices preſented for ſinne, which God never preſcribed: offices and orders of holy men and women maintained, which in the Canon of Scripture are never mentioned, nor by the ſame warranted: principles preſſed as matters

of

of faith necessary to salvation, and that on the paine of being branded with Heresie, such as were never found in the Apostles Creed; but repugnant to it, prayers, penance, and many the like practices performed with much devotion, which are not only not warranted, but condemned in Scripture as superstitious, and will-worship, and dissonant to reason in the very light of nature; all which may be matter of mourning to every gracious heart to see, although in a subject somewhat remote: but more especially if when in mercie God hath delivered us from serving at, or suffering for not serving at such Altars as did our progenitors; and whilest we our selves professe a reformation of the Altar of God, Gospel-worship and Ordinances; we shall even at home finde Altars of another kinde erected, and erecting: it may be some casting off Gods Altars of Gospel-Ordinances, not worshipping in any external and formal administration, but by their owne pretended spiritual, supernatural, celestial way of omitting all duties which God hath prescribed, giving God only (if indeed ever) the privat retirements and inward actings of the soul in-

stead

ſtead of Word and Sacraments; which is no leſſe then down-right profaneneſſe, and (if any worſhip) a will-worſhip of their owne invention for it, never was of divine preſcription. But in ſuch alſo as profeſſe to God and his Altar; I feare we ſhall finde upon ſerious enquiry, Altars at leaſt formally, if not materially built beſides the Altars of God: which if any do not diſcerne, I ſhall ſay for their conviction, as *Samuel* to *Saul*: *What meaneth the bleating of the ſheepe in mine eares, and the lowing of the oxen which I heare?* 1 Sam. 15. 14. So ſay I, if we all cleave cloſe to the Altar of God, what meanes the gathering of Churches in the midſt of us: the diſtinct and oppoſite Aſſemblies: the Church-Covenant made a dore of admiſſion into Church-membership, even unto the baptized into one body: the cry of men againſt the Miniſterie as Antichriſtian: and the Aſſemblies of Chriſtians reformed, as Babyloniſh whores: the loweſt of the people making themſelves Miniſters: with the cry, that *All the Lords people are holy*: and the very oppoſition of Gods owne Ordinances (as to the matter of them) in the different formes of

administration? Do we not see some dipping in rivers and standing pooles, whilest others are baptizing in places of publick worship: some breaking bread in distinct societies, shutting the doore on such as themselves cannot deny to be by Baptism actually consecrated Church-members (if that be which cannot be denied, the doore of admission) but also not ejected, nay, themselves being witnesses, sincerely, godly, and savingly related to Christ, though not conforming to their separate constitutions, whilest others administer the Lords Supper to the Lords people as such, though not in such a Church-way? nay, my brethren, may not we see principle against principle, preaching against preaching, prayer against drayer, thanksgiving against thanksgiving, and Fast against Fast? as if we were resolved to confound the very God of wisdome with our divided worship of him: in which opposition both cannot be the Altar of God, the one must needs be our owne threshold and post set by Gods threshold and post in the Lords Temple: both cannot plead divine prescription, and therefore the one must needs be humane invention

and

and ſuperſtition, whatever cry of holineſſe and ſanctity go before it, or accompany it: now, which of theſe different adminiſtrations are the Altar of God, and which the Altar againſt the Altar of God, I will not determinately pronounce, leſt I be reputed cenſorious, and charged with violence and bitterneſſe, the common reproach of ſuch as ſincerely reprove the erroneous principles and practices of our dayes: but to the exciting of the humiliation required, and the quickening of ſincere worſhippers of God to their duty, I ſhall briefly direct to the object by ſome few Characters, the uſual concomitants of Altar-building, that whereſoever we ſee ſuch concomitants, we may conclude, or at leaſt be jealous, that they are the people acting the ſinne of Altar-building: and if any mans conſcience ſhall inferre the concluſion from ſuch premiſes rationally propoſed, I deſire them to obſerve the counſel of the Apoſtle *James*, to *be ſwift to heare, ſlow to ſpeak, ſlow to wrath, knowing that the wrath of man worketh not the righteouſneſſe of God. Wherefore lay apart all filthineſſe and ſuperfluity of maliciouſneſſe, and receive with meekneſſe the Word*

that is graffed in you, which is able to ſave the ſoule, James 1. 19, 20, 21. Conſidering the obſervation of a Reverend Expoſitor on the text, the worſt thing we can bring to a religious controverſie, is anger: the firſt character of Altars beſides the Altar of God is, *doctrines diſſonant to the truth of God*: for principles muſt needs ſquare the practice and Altar-building muſt needs be theoretical before it be practical: hence commonly called our owne inventions and imaginations ſo denominated from the corrupted underſtanding acting the ſame: The firſt prophane Altar that ever *Iſrael* are noted to provoke divine wrath withall, was erected with the diſſonant doctrine, *Theſe are thy gods, O Iſrael, that brought thee out of Egypt*, Exod. 32. 4. And throughout the whole Hiſtory of the Altar-building of the backſliding Jewes we ſhall finde when ever the Prieſts offered unto *Baal*, *the Prophets did propheſie lies in the Lords Name:* If they do but formally build Altars, invading the Prieſthood, and corrupting the adminiſtration of divine worſhip, it muſt be uſhered in with the doctrine of the peoples holineſſe, and *Moſes* and *Aarons* ambition,

Mr. *Mant.* on *James* 1 Caracter

2 Diſſonant Doctrines

ambition, as did *Corah* and his company under the Goſpel; this ſinne is generally denominated *mans doctrine*, *another goſpel*, *the bringing in of damnable doctrine*, *divers and ſtrange doctrines*, by which ſuch as follow them are ſaid to beperverted and turned aſide from the Goſpel & doctrine of Chriſt: and this is obſervable, that the Apoſtle dehorting from divers ſtrange doctrines, enforceth his dehortation with this reaſon, *We have an Altar, &c.* Heb. 13. 9, 10. As if he would have ſaid, Theſe divers and ſtrange doctrines are Altars againſt that Altar we have received and owned: and when the Fathers (as was before noted) ſaid of Hereticks, that they built Altar againſt Altar, it was occaſioned by their curſed doctrines; ſo that where we ſee any with *Arminius* advance mans free will againſt Gods free grace; or with *Socinus* teach our repentance to be Gods acquittance againſt the propitiatory ſatisfying (to divine juſtice) property of the blood of Chriſt: With the *Familiſts*, *Seekers*, or *Anabaptiſts*, to teach immediate Inſpirations and Revelations of a pretended ſpirit, to be equal to, nay, above the authority of the Scriptures: With the *Arians*, to deny Chriſt

his divine nature: With the *Seekers* to deny Gospel-Ordinances in the matter, or with *Anabaptists* in the manner of their administration: With the *Separatists*, to teach that pollutions are sufficient ground of separation from true Churches, though retaining fundamentals: that Baptisme is not sufficient to admission to Church-membership without the Congregational Covenant; that the holinesse of men, as Saints, meerely Saints, is a sufficient authority to invade the Ministerial function, and the like; there we may see, and with sorrow say, Altars are in building against the Altars of God: for these principles being oppugnant to the rules of the Lords worship, must needs lead to practices opposite to his prescribed performances: this Character is so commonly the concomitant of Altar-building, that many times the professors of this sinne conceale from their disciples the absurdest of their doctrines, till by some of lesse concernment they are made *Skepticks* in Religion, and so capable of admitting any doctrines: and when they dictate any, it is only as present light, which they may oppose shortly: as much as may be declining

ning the teſte and trial of the Word, that they may be uſually and well called (by the epithete *Tertullian* gave them) *Lucifugæ Scripturarum*, ſhunners of Scriptures light.

The ſecond Character of Altar-building, as many times it's concomitant, and indeed cauſe, tis the *publike exhibition of Aſtrological predictions*, a religion amongſt the Heathen, whoſe Altars ſtand oppoſite to the Altar of God; and willing to be received as an Art among Chriſtians and profeſſed people of God, but could never finde entertainment but under the defection from Gods true worſhip and the erection of Idolatry and Superſtition: Starrie prophecies were ever more ſuitable for *Egyptian* and *Babyloniſh* idolaters then *Iſrael*-worſhippers at Gods Altars: never ſhall we read the ſame acted or allowed in *Iſrael* but in Altar-building dayes, and by Altar-building Princes; and as it roſe with this ſinne, it fell with the ſame, being both together removed by religious Altar-reforming Princes: and uſually the Prophets of God were found in *Jeruſalem* the place of Gods Altar whileſt Soothſayers and falſe Divincrs were in *Samaria* the Al- 2. *charact.*

tar-building Citie: the Prophet *Isaiah* joynes *Iacobs* being full *with the manners of the East, and Sorcerers of the Philistines*: with their being *full of Idols*, as the canſes of Gods deſertion of them, *Iſa.* 1, 6. Not to ſtand upon the ſeveral upbraiding expoſtulations of God with his owne people and other Nations for attending to the divined lies of their Magicians, Soothſayers, Star-gazers, and monethly Prognoſticators: I ſhall only deſire you to obſerve that which ſeemes a very obſervable evidence of this concomitant Character (*viz*) Gods promiſe in the reſtoration of his Church by Chriſt to cut off *Enchanters*, and that they ſhould have no more *Soothſayers*: is joyned with the reforming of his owne Altar by *cutting off their Idols* and turning them from worſhipping the works of their owne hands, *Mic.* 5. 12, 13. Not only under the Law was this found to be a concomitant (if I may not ſay cauſe) of the many Altars againſt God, but alſo under the Goſpel Soothſaying, Starrie Prediction, Aſtrological Propbecies will appeare an attendant on, or indeed rather a preparer and precurſor of Errors, Hereſies, Schiſmes, and ſaddeſt corruptions in the doctrine

Deute. 18. 10, 11, 12. Iſa. 44. 25. 57. 12, 13, 14

doctrine and worſhip of God that Goſpel Altar at which we worſhip: a witneſſe hereof may be the Jewes, who in their blindneſſe retaining *Moſes* againſt Chriſt, are by the Apoſtle hinted to be oppoſite to the Altar of God, *Heb.* 10. 13. Do not the dictates of their Starre-numbring Cabaliſts obdurate them in their ſuperſtitious way? Their falſe Prophets ſometimes heighten their hopes of the approach of their fantaſtical Meſſiah (as did *Abraham* the Jew, aſſuring them that the time of his coming ſhould be in 1464.) to the hardening their of hearts againſt the true Meſſiah already come: unto which we may adde the experiences of the Primitive Church in the Hereticks that roſe up to corrupt the Word of truth: if we conſider thoſe ſorts of Hereticks, (*viz.*) *Simonianiſts*, *Cleobianiſts*, *Doſitheans*, *Gortheans*, *Menandraniſts*, *Carpocratians*, *Marcioniſts*, *Valentinians*, *Baſilidians* and *Saturnilians*) in the Primitive times noted to bring in the falſe Chriſts, falſe Prophets, falſe Apoſtles, renting aſunder the Church with their falſe doctrine againſt God and Chriſt; which *Thebulis* at *Jeruſalem* received and began to propagate. What a line of Aſtro-

Euſeb. Eccl. hiſt. l. 4. c. 21.

Astrology may be seene in their principles, attributing the production of many and various things, to many and various powers: advancing their owne divinations above Scripture-Divinity: and their Magical practices and enumerations to the astonishing of their auditors; nay, this line is not only to be seene in, but as it were to lead unto their corrupting principles and practice. We might hereunto adde *Manes*, the author of the *Manichees*, the founder of the Heresie of two beginnings, who taught the worshipping of the Sunne, and the like principles, properly flowing from starrie divination: and *Marke* the knowne Magician, confuted by *Irenæus*, who baptized *in the name of the unknowne father of all things, and in the truth mother of all things, &c.* A cleer Altar against Gods Altar. But to what purpose should we send so farre to finde Heresie attended with Necromancie, when nearer home in later years it hath beene, and is the great instrument to advance the Mahumetan and Popish superstition? who knowes any thing of the Papal stories, that knowes not this to have beene the step to advance the man of sin, and that Astrological

Euseb. Eccles. hist. lib. 4. c. 21. *Socra.* Sch. lib. 1. c. 27. *Euseb.* in Eccles. hist. lib. 4. c. 11.

gical conclusions, starrie predictions, and magical actions have not only beene countenanced and allowed, but also studied and advanced in their order of exercises: To the further evidencing its existence in the Church, we might muster up the censures of free Councels and Ecclesiastical Assemblies: the condemnations of it by the Primitive Fathers: the wholesome Lawes, Imperial, Civil, Ecclesiastical against Diviners, Astrologers, and the like: the variety of punishments, as banishment, imprisonment, confiscation, death to the professors, or indulgers of starrie predictions, and confessions of some of their owne professors: all which do not only evidence its existence in, but also danger to the Christian Churches in the fulnesse of what is reported to have beene confessed by one *Cornelius Agrippa*, once an Arch-Magician, who bewailing his mis-spent youth in this Art, saith, *They that professe to it, feare not to teach most pernicious Heresies and Infidelities: whilest they professe with impious temerity, that the gift of Prophecie, the power of Religion, the secrets of conscience, the command over Devils, the vertue of miracles, the efficacie of supplications, and the state*

of

of the life to come, do all depend on the Starres are vouchsafed by them, and may be knowne by them. But thus much may be sufficient to evidence its contemnitancie with this sin of Altar-building, both before and since Christ came in the flesh, and to give us cause, if we finde the same to shew it selfe in the midest of us (as it usually puts up in troublesome times and places, as most suitable to their doubtful destinies) to suspect Altar-building to attend it: but upon serious search, and diligent observation we shall easily see to the sadning of pious spirits, not only hath Astrology appeared under our confusions and commotions, but also not been rebuked, but rather indulged and countenanced; I, and by too many received to the emboldening of its professors with wonted impudency to enter the lists, and engage the contests for divining, predicting Astrology, so often foyled by Civil and Ecclesiastical censures in the Church; nay, and by Heathens themselves strangers to the Church: their raging arguments produced against arguments of reason and Scripture: the reviling tearmes against Divines and Ministers of the Gospel, not only now living

ving to defend divine providence from their ſtarrie encroachments, but even ſuch as are long ſince rotted in the grave, doing what in them is, to the killing of their labours, which do live, and will live to their conviction and confuſion: their declared enmity to Religion, publiſhing and predicting as the pretended influence of the Starres, the variety of confuſions and ſad diviſions concerning it: evermore propheſying evil to the Truth according to the wonted practice of its profeſſors: and their blazing forth the leaſt of failings; (nay, ſometimes imagined) in Divines, to the rendring of their perſons and function vile: whileſt they ſound the trumpet of their owne praiſe, often recollecting thoſe things they have ſeemingly foretold, and have accidentally come to paſſe, but burying in oblivion their never accompliſhed predictions (which may ſet *Mercury* on work, as *Seneca* once wittily fancied, to intreat the gods to abridge the life of *Claudius*, if for no other cauſe, yet of very pitie and compaſſion to the poore Aſtrologers, who had already beene taken with ſo many lies from year to year, that if the deſtinies were not more favourable

as the great Plague threatened to be in *London* 1652.

ble then their ground was, ſure the credit of Aſtrology would decay for ever:) of which, if a man ſhould, as it is reported of the Lord of *Arundel*, note but their yearly *Almanacks* with repugnant notes at the beginning, they would oftentimes prove more true then ſuch predictions. Theſe things I ſay are not to be paſt without obſervation as the evidence of that height of their exiſtence and countenance in the mideſt of us (which may create our jealouſie, if I may not ſay conclude) the ſin of Altar-building to be on foot among us: Aſtrological impoſitions upon the peoples faith, lately ſtarted up with peremptorineſſe and impudence; with the peoples apt reception thereof, as more infallible Prognoſtications of the government of the world and Church then either Scripture-prophecie or promiſe provoked a reverend Divine to redeeme time from his more ſerious ſtudies to the poſing and puzling of the Magical-Aſtrological-Diviner: induced by this very reaſon, conſcience of duty (to uſe his owne words) to ſtand up, *to ſpeak a word for God, Chriſt, the holy Ghoſt, Church and Saints againſt a preſſe and peſt of Magical, magephemerical, magnaſtrological, &c.*

Mr. *John Gaule* his Magaſtromancer, poſed and puzled: ſee his Epiſt. to the Reader

&c. of books of late crept, nay, crouded in amongſt us, to the diſhonour of God, denying of Chriſt, deſpighting the Spirit, cauponizing of the Word, diſturbing the Church, ſubverting of Religion, diſtracting of the State, ſcandalizing weak Chriſtians, and ſeducing of common people, yea, to the promotion of Idolatry, Superſtition, Hereſie, Schiſme, &c.

We ſee then, my brethren, this ſinful Art of Starre-divining, as a concomitant of the ſin after which we are enquiring, to be too evident in the mideſt of us: I ſhall a little, and very briefly note to you the fitneſſe of this ſinful Art, to characterize the ſin of Altar-building, that to the quickening of your affections, you may more ſeriouſly heed it, though it hath beene but ſeldome hinted: and that in noting its nature, and the Churches obſervation concernig it.

Firſt, as for its nature: not to ſtand upon it as erroneous, and heretical as it is in it ſelfe, the rules of it, and inferences from the ſame became directly contrary to the doctrine of faith: nor its aptitude to engage needleſſe ſcrupuloſities and ſuperſtitious obſervations of this as ominous, and that as lucky, to the enſlaving a mans

a mans will in every action to the obſervation of every circumſtance, and ſubjection to the Starres: nor yet of its uncertainty, whereby the event ſometimes falls contrary to the prediction, as *Firmicus*, a friend to Saint *Auguſtine* found in obſervation of the fate of two children borne in his houſe, at one and the ſame moment, which yet was calculated by the ſtarres to be the ſame, but by the Law and cuſtome of the Countrey proved quite contrary: I ſhall only note its nature in relation to this ſin; and we ſhall finde it of a ſuitable nature to receive and propagate innovations and falſe will-worſhip, not only as it is *Skeptical*, certaine in nothing but the uncertainty of their owne aſſertions: but alſo as it *diſpoſeth the Stars and Celeſtial bodies into the chaire of divine providence*, whileſt, as was before noted, it placeth all, even ſecrets and ſupreme happineſſe in the power of the Planets, which doctrine muſt needs ſet them as objects of admiration, and ſo of adoration: a very naturall way to build Altars objectively, by giving the worſhip and honour of the Creator and diſpoſer of all things to the creatures: without doubt this was to the

Jewes

Jewes as to other Nations, the leading principle to worship the Queene and the hoast of Heaven, nay, further, *dictates a doctrine of universal Toleration of all religions*: never in the least admitting any limitation or restraint which might be of too sad a reflection upon it self: Hence *Ptolomy* saith, that the disposition or inclination which divers Countries have to worship one God before another, cometh from the constellation of the Planets: as *Jupiter* and *Saturne* make a Jew: *Mars* a *Persian* to worship the fire; *Mercury* a *Christian*: and with the *Moon* an *Antichrist*: so that whilest this sinful Prognosticating Art makes the Planets the authors, it must needs make them indulgers and approvers of the exercise of all religions, or religious formes, though never so repugnant and inconsistent each to other: (this is sure the reason why Astrologers have in our late dayes Prognosticated very often the liberty of all religions to be exercised, and no Discipline for the restraint thereof ever spoken for by them:) and is a fit foundation to build many Altars upon, as observed experience hath too clearly evidenced, for as an every dayes Sabbath

is no Sabbath, ſo an every way of worſhip without confinement to divine preſcription is no way of true worſhip unto God; for novelty will be building when at liberty: And Aſtrology it ſelfe may by this meanes come to be an Altar, a religion as it was among the Heathen.

And laſtly, *it's enmity to Chriſtian Religion*, which nature muſt needs render it very capable of introducing another, though directly oppoſite: this enmity is evidenced by that *antitheſis* it hath ever ſtood in to Religion by the Magical operators, and planitary predicters, notorious malice and envie in defaming, diſgracing, calumniating, deriding, contemning, oppoſing the Miniſters of the Goſpel: and predicting frequently the decayes of the encouragements; nay, and the very falling of their calling, (promiſed to be perpetuated till the Church be perfect in heaven:) nay, not only is their enmity againſt the inſtruments, which muſt hold up and continue the Altar of God, Chriſtian Religion, but by their fatal (yet hitherto falſe) predictions againſt Religion it ſelf; for in the firſt beginning and tender ſpring of faith the

Lord *Howard* in his Defenſative againſt poyſon of ſuppoſed prophecies. *ch.* 22. *p.* 111

the obſervers of the Planets gave out in their Pamphlets, That the Name of Chriſt ſhould not be had in honour at the uttermoſt above two hundred yeares, which falling out by tract of time to be an egregious lie, *Albumazar* (to keep his diſciples in life) adjourned the deſtruction of our Religion two hundred years higher, ſuppoſing undoubtedly this ſhould be the utmoſt ſtint and period of our continuance, which (maugre their malice) continueth to this day, and ſhall continue; ſo that we ſee ſufficient in its nature to make it a character being ſo capable of being a cauſe of Altar-building.

But let us paſſe on to the Obſervations of ſincere worſhippers of God concerning it: and what wiſe obſerver is or ever hath beene in the Church of God to whom it hath not appeared that thoſe Aſtrological artiſts ever were more rife in Heatheniſh then in Chriſtian, in Popiſh then in Proteſtant, in former then in later times? that they were alwayes moſt buſie in turbulent, diſtracted times and places, where wars domeſtick or forreigne, fitted people for ſedition, faction or ſchiſme, &c. that the proper

fruits of their Schooles, Societies, Religion, Practice, and Profeſſion, were the nouriſhing of Nations in Idolatry, Sorcery, Superſtition and Impiety: that men of the greateſt learning, wiſdome, vertue, conſcience and piety, have not derided and deſpiſed them, whileſt men of the contrary diſpoſition have feared their Prognoſtications, and believed their Predictions: but to cloſe up all of much that might be obſerved, that when and whereſoever their Divinations and Preſagings were moſt received: it was not a fearful preſage of a decay of Religion, and of a declining Church: in a word, that the Word Church, or true Religion of God never flouriſhed, or was eſtabliſhed in any Kingdome or Nation where Magicians, Diviners, Sooth-ſayers and Aſtrologers were countenanced or connived at; nay, where they were not condemned and ſuppreſſed.

Now, my brethren, theſe things conſidered, I leave it to every unprejudiced man to conſider whether the acting, advancing, ſeeking to, or ſuffering in ſilence, Aſtrology, and its Predictions; give not juſt cauſe to Miniſters of the Goſpel to complaine of, and cry out againſt

gainſt ſuperſtition, innovations, Altar-building againſt Gods Altar, as the ſad attendant on, or effect of Star-gazing? and whereſoever we ſee in divided parties exerciſing diſtinct practiſes, this Art to be owned, allowed, pleaded for, and believed; there we may conclude a juſt ſuſpition at the leaſt of their departing from the Lord and his worſhip, to follow their own inventions.

The third Character as the conſtant concomitant of Altar-building, is, *dangerous ſeparations from the union of the Saints and body of the Church of God.* This is that which I have before noted to be the ſad effect of this ſin, whether materially or formally acted, as we have inſtanced in *Corahs* and his company's gathering a Congregation, and diſjoyning themſelves from the Camp of *Iſrael*: *Jeroboam* and his ſubjects ſeparation from the Temple, not to this day cemented by many evidences and inſtances under the Goſpel. Well may I then call that a concomitant, which was before proved an effect of the ſin, and well may that be a character, which is both a concomitant and effect of Altar-building: and now (my brethren) I would I could

ſay with the Apoſtle, *I rejoyce to ſee your order and ſtedfaſtneſſe in the faith*: your order in orderly union, every member keeping its proper place without ambition or murmuration, and all keeping cloſe in that one body into which we were all baptized, but alas! (*horreſco referens*) I ſpeak it to our ſhame and ſorrow this day in the ſight of God, What man that can but halfe ſee, ſeeth not factions, ſchiſmes, and ſad diviſions to encreaſe in the mideſt of us? ſome men not only profeſſing to this Miniſter, and crying him up, not only above, but againſt other Miniſters; and others owning that, and adhering to him and his principles, making them matters of faith, becauſe ſpoken by him, rather then grounded on the Word: ſo that *ſome are of Paul, ſome of Apollo*, as if neither themſelves, nor the Miniſters were of Chriſt: theſe contentions, ſtrifes, diviſions, the Apoſtle doth not only not commend whileſt he dehorts from ſuch diſſenſions, but expreſſely condemnes them as *carnal*: and ſeemees to hint the ſame to be a ſetting of them as objects of their faith, worſhip, and ſo Altars againſt Chriſt the true Altar of them all: whileſt he expoſtulates

ſtulates, *Is Chriſt divided? was Paul crucified for you?* either were ye baptized into the name of *Paul*? rejoycing he had baptized few among them, leſt they ſhould ſay he baptized in his owne name: which expoſtulations are vehement affirmations, that ſuch as denominate themſelves by the name of their Teachers, as having their perſons in admiration, though never ſo eminent; *to divide Chriſt*, to owne their Teachers, *as their Saviours and Redeemers*, and ſuch into whoſe name and profeſſion they were baptized, 1 *Cor.* 12, 13, 14. not only are we (I ſay) thus divided in our profeſſion of relations to this and to that Miniſter: but alſo in Church-way, ſome of Independent Church-wayes, ſome of Arminian, ſome of Socinian, ſome of Anabaptiſtical, ſome of Seekers, and it were well if ſome were not profeſſedly of ranting Churches and Aſſemblies; all which ſeparate from the body of the Church, refuſing to worſhip God with the in way of miniſtration by him preſcribed, by it practized: and ſuch as do ſo divide, never yet diſproved the ſame, either in matter or forme, notwithſtanding their calumniating charges of all *out*

Cujus nomine in religione cenſeri volumus ab eo redẽptos ejuſque nos proprios eſſe profitemur, baptiſmus eſt ſacramentum confœderationis cum eo in cujus nomen baptizamur. Par. in loc.

of their way, though baptized, and approved pious, as in wayes and hedges with the Heathen: as the members of the ſcarlet-coloured whore: brats of *Babylon*, ſubjected to Antichriſtian Miniſtery, out of the way of Chriſt, and therefore to be gathered into a Church-way: and exchange their baptiſmal admiſſion into the Church for an admiſſion by a Congregational Covenant; a word: profeſſion of the faith which is not in them; and engaging to joyne in ſuch Aſſemblies, and be edified in their principles of new light, though never ſo contrary to the old light of Scriptures; nay, and undetected, and ſo ſubject unto changes: nay, let the ſeveral ſubdiviſions, and withdrawing of members from collected ſeparate Churches: the many Sects and ſorts of Churches that have appeared and beene profeſſed ſince the firſt rent from the body of the Churches in the Nation by the old Browniſts, and of late Independents, be a witneſſe of this ſad effect and concomitant which ſo clearly characterizing the ſin (whileſt, as I before noted, all of theſe Sects and ſorts that thus ſeparate themſelves from the Church, cannot be all, or any of them the way of Gods

Gods worſhip, who is one, and will be worſhipped by his owne way, in his own Church.) may irritate our jealouſie, may as premiſes lead us clearly to infer the concluſion that Altars are built, and in building againſt the Altar of God, with which our heart is to be affected, and our ſelves humbled before God, as becomes ſincere worſhippers at his Altar.

4. Enmity

The fourth Character found to be the conſtant concomitant of building Altars againſt the Altars of God, *is deadly enmity to the Miniſters of God which wait upon Gods Altar.* In all Religions, the Prieſt, or Prieſtly Office, (as eſſential to the ſupport of the Altar-worſhip) is ever advanced, protected, and provided for by the friends, ſupplanted, oppoſed and deſtroyed by the enemies of ſuch Altar-worſhip: and it is to me very obſervable, that Gods charge of conſtant waiting at his Altar, goes not without a *Take heed thou forſake not the Levite all thy dayes*, *Deut.* 12 19. So that Altar-Miniſtery, and the Altar it ſelf, whether true or falſe, do alwayes ſtand together: what rebellious innovation read we in the ſtory of Altar-building *Iſrael*, not accompani-

ed

ed with a reſiſtance of the Miniſtery appointed to wait at Gods Altar: the rebellion of *Corah* and his company chargeth *Aaron* as well as, nay, more immoderately then *Moſes*, *to have taken too much upon him*: the unjuſt affectation of the Prieſthood is eminently reproved by *Moſes*, and confuted by the miraculous budding of *Aarons* rod: and their Cenſers beaten into plates: *Jeroboam* ſets not up falſe Altars at *Dan* and *Bethel* without ſuſpending the Miniſters of Gods Altar *ab officio & beneficio*, from their work and wages, and the ſtretching forth of his hand againſt the Prophet of God ſent from *Jeruſalem*: *Ahabs* Altars and Idolatry is not acted without an *Elijah's* complaint, *They have broken downe thine Altars, and ſlaine thy Prophets*: and if ever falſe Altars are ſubverted, and the Altar of God reſtored, if but by the ſeeming zeale of *Jehu*, or the ſincere zeale of *Elias*, the Prieſts of *Baal* muſt be the ſacrifice, that the Prieſts of God may be reſtored. It is recorded to the everlaſting honour (and to the luſtre of the reformation) of *Aſa*, *Hezekiah* and *Joſiah*, reſtorers of Gods true Altar, that they ſet the Prieſts and Levites

2 Chron. 11.13,14.

1 Kings 31.4.

1 Kings 18.19.

2 Kings 10
2 Chron. 29.13. 4
15. 3.

vites (Miniſters of the Altar) in their places, and provided their full maintenance to their encouragement: putting a period to the ſad complaint that *Iſrael* had now for a long ſeaſon *beene without the true God, and without a Prieſt to teach, and without Law*; not onlydo inſtances abound thus under the Law, (which we uſe the more, becauſe of the proper uſe of Altars under it) but alſo under the Goſpel. Is it not clear to every reaſonable obſervant eye; that the Jewiſh and Paganiſh Prieſts oppoſed by themſelves, and provoked others againſt the Apoſtles of Chriſt? Do not the Apoſtolical Epiſtles demonſtrate the deadly enmity of the falſe Apoſtles againſt the true Apoſtles, calumniating them, ſubverting their Miniſtery, and diſſwading from their maintenance; neceſſitating their boaſting beyond their purpoſe: and pleading in the defence of Miniſterial maintenance, as by the Altar-rule it was required, when themſelves had ſufficient and abounded? Did not the rage of Paganiſh perſecution purſue an *Ignatius* or *Policarpus*, and ſuch Miniſters of the Churches as the principal objects? will not an Apoſtate *Julian* ſubtilly labour to ſubvert the

the worſhip of Chriſt, by ſubſtracting the Miniſterial maintenance: ſubverting the Schooles of their qualification, and by univerſal toleration, ſupplanting their Ordination of Miniſters. If ever *Arrius* will build his Altar of denying Chriſt his Divinity, *Athanaſius* muſt be the object of his oppoſition: ſo on the other hand, if a Chriſtian *Conſtantine* will owne and advance the Altar and worſhip of God in Chriſt, he will court and comfort, cheriſh and ſupport the deſpiſed and dejected Miniſters thereof; largely allowing of himſelfe, and providing for their ſubſiſtence and encouragement: for ſuperſticious ſeducers, and will-worſhip-innovators know the Miniſters of the Goſpel to be like the Dog in the Fable, defending the ſheep from diſſipation and deſtruction by their wolviſh property: and the ſincere worſhippers of God well know that God will not be enjoyed immediately, having appointed a *Moſes* a Mediatour, nor can we expect the tender of divine worſhip in his immediate preſence, who hath appointed an Ordinance of intercourſe betweene himſelfe and his Church; *the Miniſtery of his Altar*, which he hath promiſed to vindicate and

pre-

preſerve to the end of the world: when ever he promiſed the communications of himſelf to, or the acceptation of worſhip from his Church: ſo that enquiring after the actors of this ſin of Altar-building, we muſt obſerve who they are that expreſs enmity, not to the perſons of particular Miniſters only, but to the Miniſtery of Gods Altar, making it a ſufficient guilt, *odium*, and object of enmity to be denominated a Miniſter; let us take notice who decline and deſpiſe it; Who *are they* that make this Office the object of railing and reviling, denominating it Antichriſtian, needleſſe, imperious, proud, inſulting, enſlaving men to needleſſe nicity, and cruel bondage, and all becauſe it corrects their errour, curbs their ſuperſtition, and commands in the Name of the Lord their obedience to divine preſcriptions: who they are that raiſe perſecution againſt, and with railing tearmes render Miniſters as Miniſters vile in the eyes of men; and by pretended revelations and prophecie decry the Office, ſaying, This Antichriſtian Order and its Ordination to this Office muſt meet with a period: proclaiming liberty to Chriſtians as Chriſtians to invade this Sacred Function,

on, and to ſpeak in the Name of the Lord uncalled, and unqualified, and that provoke by principles, petition, or pretended example to deſtroy and have diverted the maintenance of ſuch as wait on the Altar, deſigned to them both by God and man: theſe, I ſay, that thus appear deadly enemies to the Inſtrument of divine worſhip, the Ordinance of waiting at Gods true Altar, the Goſpel-Miniſtery, although with ſeeming ſanctity, and a ſhout of ſaintſhip, cannot be excuſed from juſt ground (of ſuſpition at the leaſt) of building Altars beſides the Altar of God.

5 Diſpenſac: The fifth Character as the concomitant of building Altars beſides the Altar of God, is, *the diſpenſation of divine worſhip, without the divine ſtamp of a due Call and Ordination*: God never yet appointed Altar-worſhip without an Altar-office, which might not be common to every one, nay, which no man muſt take upon him, but he which is called of God, Heb. 5. 4. as was *Aaron*. If Miniſtery be as (it cannot be denied) a diſtinct Office under Law or Goſpel, it muſt needs have a due Inauguration thereunto: for as in a State an every mans Magiſtracie is a no Magiſtracie;

ſtracie ; ſo in the Church an every mans Miniſtery is no Miniſtery: a ſinful ſeeking of the Prieſts Office, upon the pretence of the peoples holineſſe, to be witneſſed againſt by the plates of their cenſers, and the budding of *Aarons* rod is ſuitable to *Corahs* ſeparate rebellion : a *Whoſoever will, let him bring a bullock, and conſecrate himſelf a Prieſt*, is a fit Canon of *Jeroboams* conſtituted Altar-worſhip at *Dan* and *Bethel* : the high-way to bring the loweſt of the people into the Prieſts Office. When did falſe Prophets run ſo faſt unſent by the Lord, but when the Altars of *Iſrael* were increaſed like the ſtreets in *Jeruſalem*? Not to multiply needles inſtances in this clearcaſe, let the obſervation of the Churches of God in al ages witneſſe the uſurpation of the Miniſterial Function never to be found in the Church whileſt the doctrine and worſhip of Chriſt was preſerved pure and uncorrupted, and never out of the Church when and where falſe doctrines and ſuperſtitious innovations did abound : the promiſe of Chriſt concerning the reſtoring of his Altar and worſhip came not without a promiſe to vindicate this Office from the invaſion of the uncalled trades-man

to

to the ſhameful conviction which ſhall extract his owne confeſſion : *I am no Prophet, I am an husbandman, men taught me to keep cattel from my youth*, Zech. 13. 5. If therefore we would finde who they are that ſinfully build Altars, we muſt conſider who they are that preach and practiſe miniſterial diſcharges without due Ordination ; who they are that countenance and contend for this uſurpation, counting it a glorious liberty that every man may lay his hand on his own head, and ſpeak in the Name of the Lord: were the Lord as eminent and immediate in his vindicative ſtroaks for this ſin under the Goſpel, as under the Law, how many *Uzzahs* would be found dead for their uncalled ſetting hand to hold the Ark of Gods worſhip, notwithſtanding the pretence of neceſſity : How many *Uzziah*-like leprous foreheads would be found amongſt us, of ſuch that by at leaſt eighty Miniſters of the Lord have beene warned ; it is not for them, but for the Miniſters of the Goſpel to offer unto the Lord. But I ſhall conclude this Character as a juſt cauſe to irritate our humiliation before the Lord with that obſervation of reverend Doctor *Hall*

2 Sam. 6. 8

2 Chr. 26. 17, 18, 19.

Hall upon a caſe not much unlike this, though ſomething different: It is a dangerous thing in the ſervice of God to decline from his owne inſtitutions; we have to do with a power which is wiſe to preſcribe his owne worſhip (in matter and forme) juſt to require what he hath preſcribed, and powerful to revenge what he hath required. D^r. Hall

The ſixth and laſt Character which I ſhall note to you, and I will but briefly note it, is *doleful conteſts for univerſal Tolerotion of all religions*, which (a wiſe obſervant) notes is nothing elſe but the putting of the true Religion out of all protection, whileſt therein Satan labours to exempt, priviledge, and for ever to ſecure his Agents and Brokers (the Seminaries and Teachers of ſoul-murthering doctrines) from being moleſted, diſcouraged and diſturbed in his work by any Government and Diſcipline Eccleſiaſtical or Civil; whereby the hands of all in power are bound up (or rather cut quite off) that they may never be able to ſerve God as they ought in the protection and propagation of his Goſpel and worſhip: who ſeriouſly conſiders the ſtrict Lawes the Lord left the Jewes

6. Univerſal toleration. Blow at the root *Obſerv.* 8. p. 157.

for the keeping of them to his true Altar, and ſees not univerſal liberty leading from the ſame, to be ſinful: nay, who conſiders mans novellous nature, and ſees not a neceſſity of being kept to ſome one Religion by authority, knowing men are naturally bent to mint Gods ſervices in their owne braine, and to go a whoring after their owne inventions, to the building of Altars beſide the Altar of God: Was this ſinne ever acted in *Iſrael*, where the ſword was ſharp and ſevere againſt innovations? The ſame may be demanded concerning the Chriſtian Churches; and upon the contrary, was not this impiety evermore the effect of impunity and univerſal liberty?

I have done with the firſt part of the enquiry, whether in the mideſt of us Altars may not be ſeene beſides the Altar of God? which we have too much cauſe to conclude in the affirmative: I have alſo noted the concomitants as Characters of this ſin, ſo that the ſubjects *of dangerous doctrine: of divining predictions: of dangerous ſeparations: of deadly enmity to Goſpel-Altar-Miniſtery: of diſpenſing divine worſhip without due call: and of doleful conteſts of Toleration of all religions:*

religions; may juſtly be more then ſuſpected abettors, advancers, if not actors of Altar-building: and who thoſe are, I leave to the obſervation of the wiſe, whoſe eyes are in their head: and paſſe forward to the ſecond matter of enquiry in order to our humiliation.

The ſecond thing to be enquired, for the defect of which we are to be humbled in the preſence of a God of jealouſie, is, *Whether the ſincere worſhippers have or do according to their duty ſee to this ſinne of Altar-building?* wherein we might enquire after their ſenſible obſervation of, and affectation with the ſin: their ſeaſonable caution, and ſerious counſel to deſiſtance; their ſpeedy accommodations of their brethren in matter of accidental temptations: and their zealous reſiſtance of the ſin according to their places, which was before noted to be acts of this duty in the religious *Iſraelites*: but inſtead of a ſpirit faithfully diſcharging theſe duties, it were well, if to our griefe, and Gods great diſhonour, ſome that have, and eminently do profeſſe to the worſhip of the true God in truth, and whoſe places more eminently engage their priority in ſu-

ſpecting and ſeeing to innovation, Superſtition Altarbuilding were not to be ſeene.

Firſt, ſtaid by their ſelf-intereſt from furious driving (with a ſeeming zeale for the Lord of Hoſts) againſt the Altars and Prieſts of *Baal*, ſuffering *Jehu*-like, *Jeroboams* Calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*, and the high places thereof to ſtand unremoved and unrebuked, if not unobſerved as to their ſinful nature, ſo ſoone as the houſe of *Ahab* is ſubverted and themſelvs eſtabliſhed in the high places of the Kingdome: as if Prelatical innovations and ſuperſtitious ceremonies were to be deſtroyed as obſtructors of their honour and high enjoyments, not as of a ſinful nature of humane invention, and againſt divine preſcription: alas! how many may we fear are ſo blinded with golden thrones and great revenues, that they cannot ſee (or rather will not) and ſo deafned that they cannot hear the reports of Apoſtaſie, backſliding, error, hereſie, and erected innovations, whereby they depart from the Lord to build Altars beſides his Altar.

Secondly, if they be ſeene and heard, are

are not ſome that ſhould be covered with ſhame, and ſit in ſorrow for ſo grievous a guilt, and greatly provoking ſin: rejoycing and readily ſolacing themſelves, and with Altar-building *Iſrael*, ſhouting not for grief, but great joy: counting, and calling it a glorious liberty of conſcience: reputing the time of the Toleration thereof the glory of Goſpel-dayes, rebuking the rebukers of ſo groſſe profaneneſſe; nay, and what is worſt of all, with brazen faces, and as given up to ſtrong deluſions, think they do God good ſervice that ſo do: preſſing into the preſence of God with ſolemne praiſes, as if God were an object of confuſed adminiſtrations: and direct oppoſite worſhips: May we not with ſorrow conſider with Doctor *Hall*, that it is a miſerable thing for Governours to humour people in their ſins, and inſtead of making up the breach, to enlarge it? Do we not know that ſin will take heart by the approbation of the meaneſt looker on? but if authority once ſecond it, it growes impudent. Exo. 32. 18

Contemplation on the golden Calfe.

Thirdly, ſome ſeeing the ſinne, and ſaying in their hearts, would it might not be, remaine ſinfully ſilent, not conſider-

Pſa. 50. 22 ing that the wicked are apt to interpret the ſilence of God himſelf as an argument of allowance: and that he that ſees the wickedneſſe of the wicked when duly called to ſpeak, and warnes not from
Ezek. 3. 18. the ſame, is chargeable with the guilt of the ſin, and reſponſible for the blood
Acts 2. 26. of the ſinner: How farre is this from an Apoſtolical ſpirit, who will ſpeak, though by ſpeaking they create enemies?

Fourthly and laſtly, ſee we not ſome ſpeaking againſt the ſin, yet ſlack in their rebukes, much below the zealous reſiſtance of the Jewes in the text, who mince not the matter, but in down-right termes diſcover the nature of the ſin, and denominate it a rebellion againſt God and us: and dictate the aggravations therof to render it vile, and not only ſo, but with ſword in hand, and reſolution in heart to reduce them to obedience, warne their deſiſtance, but how many Superiours are like old *Eli* in their rebukes? *It is an evil report that I heare of you, my ſons, do not ſo evil againſt the Lord.* Is it not ſad to ſee in very many families, wives, children, ſervants ſinfully following innovations and humane inventi-

inventions againſt the truth and worſhip of God with the ſilence, or at the beſt but ſlack rebukes of their husbands, parents and maſters? whoſe ſovereignty exerciſing its juſt ſeverity, might be an inſtrument of keeping them more cloſe to the Altar that is of divine preſcription. It will be no excuſe in the day of the Lord, for our neglect or coole, lukewarme diſcharge of our duty, to ſay we looked for God to reduce them into obedience to his owne will, when God hath inveſted us with authority, as inſtruments to this end: ſince God himſelfe expects this from man, why ſhould man expect it from God? We might remember, though God could as eaſily have prevented and redreſſed the Altar at *Horeb* by an immediate hand, yet he ſends *Moſes* downe the Mount to do it, by ſhewing his ſeverity: ſevere expreſſions of anger againſt Altar-building, do very well become and ſuit with the meekeſt *Moſes*.

I have done with the enquiry, I ſhall leave to your ſerious and ſecond thoughts how to finde out the guilt and ſubjects thereof, only if ſuch guilt be found in the Churches of God in the mideſt of us:

that Altars be built, or in building a-gainſt the Altar of God, and not regarded or ſeene unto: it is to us matter of mourning; and to the exciting your humiliation, give me leave to ſuggeſt to you two or three conſiderations as ſo many aggravations of this evil ſo vile in its nature, as hath beene evidenced: but as to us will be found thereby much more vile and grievous.

The firſt thing that may excite our ſorrow is ſuch a motive as is in the ſtory under conſideration: *viz. It is a ſinne committed whileſt God is ſtriking for Late iniquity:* Is the iniquity of *Peor*, too little for us from which we are not cleanſed to this day, although there was a plague in the Congregation of the Lord? *Joſh.* 22. 17. What a vile nature have we, that whileſt our wounds are greene for a paſt, to run upon a new rebellion? did not our late dayes abound with ſuperſtitious innovations, giving cauſe to the Papiſts inſultingly to ſay, we were poſting towards *Rome*? were not many pious people burdened in themſelves to ſee *Surplice-ſervice*, *Altar-bowing*, *Eaſtern-worſhip*, and the like, introduced to, and impoſed on the Church as abſolute parts

parts of divine worſhip? Were not many faithful Miniſters for their non-obſervance of ſuch will worſhip ſuſpended, ſilenced, and for their zealous reſiſtance many wayes afflicted? Was not the Lord provoked? did not his diſpleaſure ariſe? have we not felt the weight of his ſtroke, and ſmart of his rod? are our wounds yet healed, our deſolations repaired, and our glory reſtored? O then may it not be grief and heavineſſe of ſpirit to ſee ſome ſo ſoone to be turned from innovations of ceremonies to the bringing in of innovated doctrines, from ſuch as were but circumſtantial, and conſerved the ſubſtance of divine worſhip, to thoſe that are fundamental, in danger to ſubvert the whole frame of the divine Altar of Goſpel-worſhip? O how ſad is the echo that (methinks) I hear uttered from heaven againſt *England, Why ſhould you be ſmitten any more, ye revolt more and more.*

The ſecond thing that may affect our hearts, and engage our hearty humiliation before God for the ſin of Altar-building may be this; that if it be found in the mideſt of us unreſiſted, it is *a ſinne commit-*

committed under a ſolemne Covenant, wherein we ſtand obliged to the Lord, and with chearful hearts and hands lifted up to the moſt high God, have ſworne,

That we ſhall ſincerely, really, and conſtantly, through the grace of God, endeavour in our places, &c. the preſervation of the Reformed Religion in the Church of Scotland, &c. And to bring the Churches of God in the three Kingdomes, to the neareſt conjunction and unifermity in Religion, in Confeſſion of Faith, Forme of Church-government, Directory for worſhip, and Catechizing, &c. Artic. 1.

Secondly, *We ſhall in like manner without reſpect of perſons, endeavour the extirpation of Popery, Prelacy, &c. Superſtition, Hereſie, Schiſme and Prophaneneſſe, and whatſoever ſhall be found contrary to ſound doctrine, and the power of godlineſſe, &c. that the Lord may be one and his Name one in the three Kingdomes.* Artic. 2.

Whatſoever is conceived, and hath beene pleaded by ſome for the ceſſation of the obliging power of ſome Articles in this Covenant, yet I keow not any that have denied its obligation, and yet binding

binding force in theſe Articles, and to theſe duties, unleſſe it be ſuch as profanely jeſting with the whole, have called, or counted it *an Almanack out of date*: whileſt therefore we are under the Oath of God, may we not be covered with ſhame to ſee it broken? Oh, can we with comfort remember our paſt condemnation of Vowes violation, and diſpenſations from the obliging power of Oaths in others, and run our ſelves under the ſame guilt? O perfideous Nation that will keep no promiſe made, though to the God of faithfulneſſe! O perjurious people, whom ſacred bonds cannot binde, nor ſolemne Oath oblige! Can you without bluſhing look upon the Covenant hanging in the places of Aſſemblies, it may be many of your names ſubſcribed to it, as an evidence of your ſolemne obligation by it: and remember that whileſt you have ſworne uniformity, you propagate, or at leaſt indulge multiformity of Religion? whileſt you have ſworne the extirpation of *Baals* Altars, do you countenance or carry on the erection of Superſtition, Hereſie, Schiſme? whileſt you have ſworne to endeavour that the Lord may be one, and his Name

one:

one: Do you caſt his worſhip according to your wills, and caſt off his owne ſtanding rule, and indulge mens worſhipping him, and profeſſing his Name according to their corrupt fancies, pretended to be conſcience? think you not God to be a God of jealouſie, that will, and of power that can avenge the quarrell of his Covenant? Againſt what ſin hath his ſeverity beene expreſſed ſo much as thoſe ſins that have beene acted after, and againſt ſolemne Oaths? Let us with ſorrow and ſhame remember that the Lord was wroth with *Iſrael*, and put them out of his ſight, becauſe they forſook his Statutes and his Covenant: and made Calves, and built Altars unto them contrary to his commandments, 2 *Kings* 17.15,16,17. and their obliging oaths.

But thirdly, we have the more cauſe to be humbled before the Lord, for that *the ſevere judgements of God may ſeize upon us*, and we have cauſe with feare to expect them: I have before noted that Altar-building doth incurre Divine diſpleaſure, and ſubject a people to the fury of the Lord: how may we mourne to ſee the ſin acted and allowed, which

is

is the ſad *omen* of approaching miſerie.

Fourthly and laſtly, this may affect our hearts, and fill us with ſorrow, that ſinful Altar-building is *a ſad provoker and ſymptome of the Lords departure*; the laſt, but heavieſt of his judgements. God will ſtay and threaten many miſeries before it come to *a leaſt my ſoul depart from you:* I cannot but much obſerve the words of *Phineas* in this ſtory, when the two tribes and halfe vindicated themſelves from the jealouſie of their juſtly ſuſpicious brethren concerning their Altar-building, *This day I perceive that the Lord is among us, becauſe ye have not done this treſpaſſe, Joſh.* 22. 31. which words do clearly imply, that Altar-building againſt Gods Altar, is an undoubted argument, not only of Gods future, but preſent abſence: for if by unity and conſent in divine worſhip Gods preſence be argued; by the rule of contraries, difference in, and diſſent from divine worſhip muſt needs argue his abſence: *Contrariorum contraria eſt ratio*: Contrary reaſons enforce contrary aſſertions. O then, my brethren, is it not a woe to us, that

Jer. 6. 8.

Recte colligunt allegati Jehovam apud Iſraelitas preſentem eſſe quia religionis conſenſus adhuc ab ipſis colitur Maſ. *in loc.*

that God is departed from us, certainly Gods departure in reſpect of his counſelling, ſin-curbing, guiding and directing preſence, is a ſad preſage of his departure in reſpect of his bleſſing, preſerving, protecting preſence: the finall abſence of God is hell it ſelf: then every with-drawing of himſelf muſt be a ſpark of that fire: Happy is the man or place with whom God ſtayes to chide; for whileſt he ſtayes to reprove, there is favour in diſpleaſure; but when he leaves either man or Church, there is no hope but of ſin and vengeance. the withdrawing of divine preſence is nothing elſe but the preſence of his wrath: O can we read the Schiſmes, Errours, Hereſies, and many innovations in the mideſt of us; thoſe ſad effects and ſymptomes of divine withdrawing, as written in moſt legible characters without grief in our hearts, and tears in our eyes; nay, with a loud cry of golden liberty, and glorious times? O let us ſmite upon our thigh, and ſay, What have we done? Let us ſit in the duſt and ſigh: Let us call for the mourning women, that they may lament: conſidering that the moſt heart-

heart-piercing and doleful tune that ever Altar-building *Iſrael* did lamentingly expreſſe as the very height of their maladies and calamities, was *the Comforter that ſhould relieve my ſoul, is farre from me*, Lam. 1. 16.

The ſecond Uſe that I ſhall make of the Point, is of exhortation unto ſuch as profeſſe (but are ſuſpected in the Church of God) to be ſincere worſhippers of God: and unto them I would in the Name of the Lord deſire *to think well of their brethrens jealous enquiry after their courſes, and ſuſpition of their rare and unuſual practices ſpringing from unknowne principles:* and with a ſpirit of meekneſſe beare their juſt reproofes and Chriſtian cautions, compoſing themſelves to give an account unto their brethrens demands, and readily to declare the grounds and reaſons of their more then ordinary undertakings: I do not deny but juſt actions may be unjuſtly ſuſpected and condemned to be ſinful: but if this jealouſie can plead ignorance, it will thereby expect juſtification rather then cenſure: animoſity of ſpirit, and outcries of violence and bitterneſſe

bitterneſſe againſt the modeſt demands of jealouſie doth very much argue guilt: for it is an obſervation as true as common, *Innocencie fears no trials.* We ſhall finde an example in this very ſtory worthy imitation, the ten tribes and a half hearing of an Altar-building-work, by their Ambaſſadours make a ſevere expoſtulating, reproving demand of the ground and end of ſo ſudden, ſtrange, unconſulted, and undeclared action: yet we here have no complaints of violence, bitterneſſe, or cenſoriouſneſſe, but a ſpeedy and meek ſubmiſſion to their brethrens demand, readily declaring their motive to this work (*viz.*) to engage poſterity to Gods Altar before the Arke, their end in the erecting this Altar to be, that it may be a witneſſe of their relation to the God of *Iſrael*: Where is the ſpirit of brethren which ſhould engage a ready ſatisfying of the ſuſpitious demands of brethren? Where is the ſpirit of due ſubjection to the authority of the Churches, which ſhould declare principles and practices, and ſubmit them with meekneſſe unto triall? If brethren ſtand at diſtance from ſuch

and

and expressed offence against their singular unusual courses, may they not reflect upon themselves, and conclude it to be a self-created crosse, whilest in pride or peevishnesse they refuse to declare and submit to censure the ground and end of their strange proceedings? Have not many a *Phinehas* both joyntly and singly desired of separating congregational brethren, a platforme of their pretended way of Christ, a sum of their setled principles to which they would stick, without making new light old: an expresse of the rules drawn from Scripture, which shall regulate their practice and proceedings so different from their brethren, if I may not say dividing from the body of the Church of God; that they might be compared with the patterne in the Mount, the Scriptures of God, by which all the way of the Churches must be judged? O that I might once more intreat in the name of the sincere worshippers at Gods Altar, though not so immediately delegated as was *Phinehas*, or some of the Ministers of Gods Gospel-Altar that have demanded it) that they would at last (after all their protestations, that they would walk closest with Christ according to Gospel-rule,

and Apoſtolical practice: their ſolemne promiſe to their brethen, the performance of which hath been long, though in vaine expected:) approve their brotherly affection, and a due ſubjection to the authority of the Churches of Jeſus Chriſt, by drawing up a plat-forme of the way in which they walk: accommodating their brethren with the principles that rule their practice, ſubmitting the ſame with alacrity, and meekneſſe, unto trial: that an inability or unwillingneſſe to diſcover the ſame, ſtirre and ſtrengthen not ſuſpition, and give us cauſe to conclude them *Lucifugæ Scripturarum*, decliners of trial. Let me once more note to them this is neceſſary, that their principles may juſtifie or condemne the practice of ſome that have taken up the profeſſion of Chriſt in their way; for if we muſt gather their principles from preſent practice: their gathering Churches out of Churches: their covenant-admiſſion into Church-membership: their private mens preaching and adminiſtration of Sacraments, with the Schiſme they have made from that one body in which they were baptized: we cannot but be jealous with a holy jealouſie, that they do at the leaſt formally

mally build Altars againſt the Altar of God.

The ſecond exhortation which may rather be a dehortation, is unto ſuch as are turned aſide from the holy command, and do either materially, as the Papiſts and others; or formally, as congregational Separatiſts, build Altars beſides the Altar of God: in the Name of the Lord deſiſt your work, ſtay your proceeding, ceaſe to build; for your work will finde no acceptance with the Lord. Shall I uſe to you the dialect in the text, *Rebel not againſt the Lord and againſt us* (your brethren,) *to build you Altars beſide the Altar of the Lord.* Conſider that although Gods patience may long beare, and whileſt you offer Incenſe to the Queene of heaven, and corrupt the worſhip of a holy God, you may have plenty of victuals, you may be well, and ſee no evil; yet fury will be provoked, and take away corne, and wine, and oyle, &c. *Hoſ.* 2. Conſider, and lay it ſeriouſly to heart, that offering falſe fire to the true God, and adoring a falſe god, are Homogeneal, of the ſame nature, Altars againſt God: God is provoked to jealouſie by the rivality of falſe worſhip, as well as of falſe gods.

I ſhall not I hope againe need to open the fury of the Lord provoked by, and expreſſed againſt this ſin: only let me in generall note to you, that God hath reſolved to cover Altar-builders with ſhame, and fill them with bluſhing, notwithſtanding his long ſilence he hath reſolved that they ſhall be *aſhamed of their ſtrange ſacrifices*, Hoſ. 4.19. *and of the Oaks which they have made, and the gardens which they have choſen*, Iſa. 1.29. Know, that if any will preſume to ſtep out of his calling, and ſpeak in the Name of the Lord, uncalled; that God hath ſaid, who both can and will ſee it done: *The Prophet ſhall be aſhamed every one of his Viſion*; and in their ſhame ſhall ſay, *I am no Prophet, I am an husbandman; for men taught me to keepe cattel from my youth*, Zech. 13.4. I ceaſe to admire, & cannot but adore the juſt dealing of a righteous God, that the doctrine & practice of the Nicolaitans was uſually an attendant, or effect of the Hereſies and Innovations of the Primitive times, and that ſinful ſeparations and Altar-building innovations in matter or in forme, hath produced indulgence of filthy and abominable Ranting principles and practices in our dayes: when I ſeriouſly conſider

ſider that ſad denunciation of this ſhameful judgement in *Hoſ.* 4. 12, 13, 14. The ſpirit of whoredome hath cauſed to erre, and they have gone a whoring from under their God, they ſacrifice on the tops of the mountains, and burne Incenſe upon the hills under the Oaks, &c. *Therefore your daughters ſhall commit whoredome, and your ſpouſes ſhall commit adultery: I will not puniſh your daughters when they commit whoredome, nor your ſpouſes when they commit adultery: for themſelves are ſeparated with whores, and they ſacrifice with harlots.* Take heed leſt God ſay unto you, as he once ſaid unto *Ephraim*, becauſe they *have multiplied Altars to ſinne, Altars ſhall be unto them to ſin*, Hoſ. 8. 11. For pretended piety in the increaſe of Altars may be juſtly puniſhed with obduracie in the ſin, that God may ſay, Seeing they will introduce ſinful innovations contrary to divine preſcriptions, they ſhal ſo do to their ſhame and ſin. The Lord perſwade the hearts of ſuch as ſuperſtitiouſly build Altars in matter or forme beſides the Altar of God, to returne and ſincerely ſpeak the language of repenting *Ephraim, What have I to do any more with Idols?* So, what have we to do any more

with Altars, Innovations, humane inventions? we will wait on, and follow after divine prescriptions.

The third and last exhortation is, to such as are sincerely, and indeed worshippers of God at his own only Altar, holding fast the Covenant of God, walking according to divine commandment, and keeping communion with the Churches of God; them I would exhort in the Name of the Lord *to stick close to the Altar of God, and set your selves in your several places against such as build Altars against Gods Altar*: Let not your souls be unstable in the wayes of the Lord, declining divine prescriptions, and embracing humane inventions, and superstitious innovations: Let the world witnesse you to be conformable Non-conformists, who not conforming to some Canons and Customes of the Churches contrary to, and inconsistent with the Canon of Scripture, yet readily conforme to the worship in matter and forme, composed according to the patterne in the mount, the Word of God, conserving the unity of, and communion with the Churches of God, that continue the Altar according to divine prescription: set your zeale against

gainſt ſuperſtition, ruſhing from extreme to extreme, ſchiſmatical ſocieties, and heretical principles, and practice; proclaime ſincerity, and not ſchiſme; following after purity in divine worſhip, and not faction: to have been the cauſe of that non-compliance which expoſed you to the unjuſt charge of Puritaniſme, and ſeparation from the Temple and Altar of God. Oh be perſwaded to ſhake hands with ſuch as ſhake hands with God and his worſhip. If any will cry, the people are all holy, to the decrying of Goſpel-Miniſtery, conclude them too prophane for you to joyne with. Let not example, or eminent profeſſions of piety perſwade you to receive principles or practices unproved. Be ſure to follow the counſel of God, to go forth by the footſteps of the flocks, and to feed their kids beſide the ſhepherds tents, when you are in danger to turne aſide by the flocks of Altar-building companions: for unity to, and (as *Diodate* notes) imitation of the true Churches of Chriſt, is a preſervative againſt Apoſtaſie to Idolatry. If the ten Tribes would drive to the Altars at *Dan* and *Bethel*, draw (with the Levites, and all that ſet themſelves to ſeek the Lord)

to *Jerusalem*, to sacrifice to the Lord at his own Altar: though with the losse of your Cities, Suburbs, and sweet enjoyments: though *Israel* play the harlot, let not *Judah* offend; come not to *Gilgal* to transgresse, nor to *Bethaven* to swear by the Lord: put your selves in dayes of generall Apostasie, to be hid amongst the thousands of the Lord that bow not the knee to *Baal*: and under the protection of that God, that can restraine the fury of the fire, and rage of roaring Lions, when let loose against his servants for their adherencie to his Altar and worship; manifest your selves approved in the Lords Sanctuary, now Heresies are abroad, to a discovery of the unsound. Will it not be an answer of confidence and comfort to the Lords demand in a day of generall defection and dolor, The children of *Israel have forsaken thy Covenant, broken down thine Altars, and slaine thy Prophets, and I, even I only am left alone?* Is not constant adherencie to the sincere worship Altar of God commended to us by a cloud of witnesses, who suffered most exquisite torments for the same, not only by the Jews and Pagans, professed enemies to the Altar of God; but also by the Donatists, Navatians

1 King: 19.10.

vatians and Arrian Heretiques, apostatized from the truth of divine worship, besides Papists and Germane Anabaptists, who baptized such *baptismo flaminis* with fire, as would not be according to their fancie baptized *baptismo fluminis* with water; so that you see the counsel of God and cloud of witnesses in the Church, charging you to take heed of will-worship, humane inventions, Altar-building beside the Altar of God.

Not only are you to be exhorted to stick close to the Altar of God, and take heed of declining to, or turning after false Altars; but also *in your places, according to your capacity, set your selves against the sin of Altar-building*, sensibly observing, sadly bewailing, and speedily suppressing the sin in such as act, or advance it. Never let it be said that professed worshippers at Gods Altar shut their eyes at the increase of Altars against God, and remaine silent under the sleighting of divine prescription, and sinful innovating of superstitious matter or formes in the Lords service. Sad is the age in which we live; for that Christianity must be approved by apologizing for, nay, appearing in the defence of universal liberty of

all,

all, or any way of divine worship: and moderation made to consist in a mincing and extenuating of this sin of Altar-building; nay, in a positive silence as concerning it: as if *Moses* heart might not be soft towards *Israel*, whilest his fury is hot against their Calfe and Altar: or *Paul* let his moderation be known to all men, and yet fervently ejaculate a *Would they were cut off that trouble the Churches* by their Altar-building superstitious doctrines. Be not deceived, my brethren, sins complaint of violence and bitterness, must be no check to sincere zeale: what if many things accompany Altar-building which are of the Lords own drawing and directing; may not *Moses* more hate the golden Calfe wherein is engraven the Idolatry of the *Israelites*, then honour the Tables of stone, wherein God had engraven his Commandments, and long more to deface the Idol, then care to preserve the Tables? What soul knowes the right nature of zeale, and subscribes not to that unquestionable truth, that *every man* quoad captum, *in their places, according to their powers, are bound to defend the Altar of God against all contrary Altars of humane erection*? considering the sword

Halls Contemplations on the Calfe at *Horeb.*

put

put into the hand of the Magiſtrate, the cenſures into the power of the Church, not only to be uſed againſt ſins of the ſecond, but alſo of the firſt Table: and ſee not ſufficient reaſon to ſet it ſelf againſt (much leſſe to countenance and indulge) ſuch as ſet their poſt by Gods poſt, their threſhold by the Lords threſhold. The general commands of God to deſtroy the Altars and places built againſt his, with the exemplary zeale, not only under the Law, but alſo under the Goſpel of Civil as well Eccleſiaſtical powers, may be forcible inducements to the reſiſtance and reſtraining of Altars againſt Gods: as of *Conſtantine*, *Theodoſius*, *Valentinianus* and others; expreſſely decreeing, that in all places, and throughout every City the Temples be ſhut up, and liberty be denied to wicked men, to have acceſſe thither to commit Idolatry: as alſo that men be reſtrained from making ſacrifice, whereby they reſtrained falſe Altars, though I confeſſe they compelled not to the Altar of God, I ſhall never owne or indulge ſuch Papal cruelty, as did drive with whips the Pagan Natives in *America* to the font to be baptized before they were catechized in, and convinced of the doctrine

Bulling. 2. Decade 7, and 8. Ser.

Ferus in Decla. in *Josh.* 22. *Vtinam talis zelus in nobis esset, & quidem non unum altare erectum videmus, sed innumera.*

doctrine of Jesus Christ, & divine worship: yet I wish *Ferus* wish that men in power in republiques might imitate the Magistratical zeal of these Emperours, in not only restraining Heathenish, but also Arrian Heretical Altars, and contending for unanimity in divine worship among such as have laid hold on Gods Covenant, & are professed members of the Church: and that the authoritative Assemblies of the Churches would follow the foot-steps of the Apostolical Councel at *Antioch*, against the Altar of Circumcision: the Synods in *Asia*, at *Ancyra*, at *Antioch*, in *France*, held against the *Montanists* Altar-building Heretiques, when and where they excommunicated *Montanus*: Synods at *Rome* in *Anno* 246. and 254. against *Novatus* and his Heresie: at *Antioch* to the suppressing and condemning the Heresie of *Paulus Samosatenus*, and of the *Nicene* and other Councels against the *Arrian* Heresie: and also the authority that Jesus Christ hath left in his Church to the rejecting of Altar-building Heretiques after the first and second admonition: the charge of particular Elders of the Churches is charged on the Elders of *Ephesus*, in them on all others to look to

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the Churches of God committed to their charge, that they follow not ſeducers, which may ariſe from among themſelves to draw aſide diſciples after them.

Let us take heed of adding ſilence or ſinful indulgence of Altar-building (as the more ſad ſymptom of Gods departure) to the too many eminent and too evident ſignes thereof extant in the mideſt of us: what a black but of blemiſh was it to *Aſa*, *Amaziah*, and other reforming Kings of *Judah*, *That the high places were not removed, but the people yet did ſacrifice?* Will it not then be regiſtred to all ſucceeding ages to the infamie of our begun Reformation, that Altar-building was acted by ſome eminent zealots therein, and ſuperſtitious doctrines and practice eminently indulged by univerſal Toleration? The late liberty of innovating ſuperfluous and ſuperſtitious ceremonies conſiſtent with the ſubſtance of divine worſhip, though unfit to be annexed, was reputed a poſting towards Popery: but I am ſure, ſuffering, and not ſuppreſſing Schiſmes, all ſorts of doctrines, though never ſo diſſonant to divine dictates, and liberty to embrace any religion without the eſtabliſhing the Lords Altar, is, & will

be

be found to be the high-way to Atheiſm. The Miniſters of the Goſpel generally throughout the Nation, not many yeares ſince, acted by a ſpirit of zeale, did * declare againſt Schiſme, Errours, Hereſies, and the protection thereof by univerſal Toleration: Oh my brethren, take heed you loſe not your firſt love: be intreated in the fear of the Lord to know the authority with which Chriſt hath inveſted his Churches, and entruſted you to the defending of his Altar, when Magiſtrates will not (nay, it may be there is no Magiſtrate for to) do it: unite you together in the fear of the Lord, exhibit and exerciſe the Diſcipline of the Lord in the mideſt of his people. Let not the bounds of Suſpenſion and excommunication be utterly removed, as if never placed by the Lord about his holy Mount: Let the men of the world ſee that Chriſt can have a Church in a Nation formally no Nation, but a *Chaos* of confuſed people: ſecond your atteſtation with a firſt and ſecond exhortation to Altar-builders, if they will not ceaſe, follow them with rejection and casting off from the Sanctuary of God. Conſider ſeriouſly, that if the having in the Church them that *hold the doctrine*

*Their Atteſtation to the ſolemn *League & Covenant*, againſt Errors, Hereſies, Schiſmes, and the toleration therof

doctrine of Baalam, and of the Nicolaitans: and *ſuffering the woman Jezabel, which calleth her ſelf a Propheteſſe, to teach and ſeduce the Lords people:* be the few things that God hath againſt us; we ſhall have cauſe to fear that we ſhall follow the ſeven Churches of *Aſia* in their ſad rejection for following them in ſinful Toleration. Let therefore the Prieſts and Princes; nay, all the people of Gods *Iſrael* ſay to ſuch of their brethren, as they ſuſpect to depart from the Lord; nay, and according to their capacity, labour to effect it, that they may not rebel againſt the Lord, and againſt us, to build an Altar beſide the Altar of the Lord.

Μόνῳ πάντως δόξα Θεῷ.

FINIS.

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7 JY 57